

750/3

**LOUIS REGINALD WILLIAMS**

**GLADYS MARIE MOORE**

**Thesis submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of**

**Master of Planning and Design**

**Faculty of Architecture Building and Planning**

**University of Melbourne, August 2001**



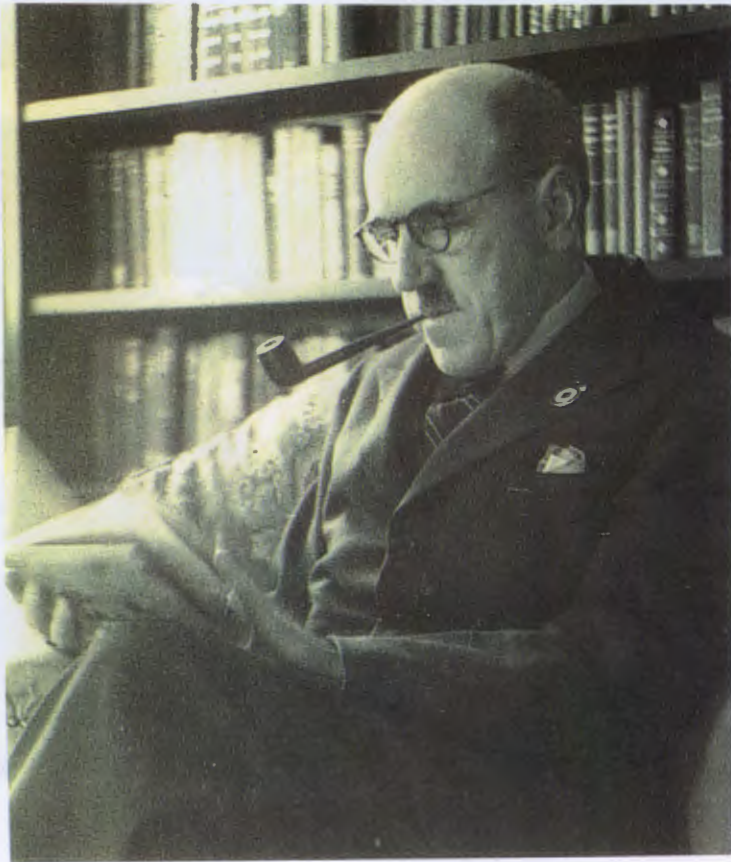
**St George's, Parkes, New South Wales, 1956.**



**St Boniface Cathedral, Bunbury, Western Australia, 1962.**

A word from Louis Williams





*Mary and Louis Williams in their home*

**Louis Williams in his library.**



**Signing a contract by proprietors, architects and builder.**





**Mary and Louis Williams at Alrey's Inlet**



**Louis Williams**



Louis Williams on 'Bon Accord Track'



Wiseman, Neville Williams, Cedric Deane, Charles Melhuish, L.R.W, Bob Simpson,  
Hugh Moore, James Albury, Roy Simpson.  
Louis Williams, with friends and staff setting off for 'Lake Mountain'





**Alrey's Inlet lighthouse, cottage, and cliffs at sunset.**

# CONTENTS

## Vol. I

	Acknowledgements	i
	Introduction	iii
Chapter 1	Formative years	1
Chapter 2	Other influences	8
Chapter 3	Williams the man	14
Chapter 4	Arts & Crafts	23
Chapter 5	Other denominations	34
Chapter 6	Rural churches	42
Chapter 7	Suburban churches	48
Chapter 8	The offering of space	57
Chapter 9	Proportion & scale	64
Chapter 10	Furnishings & Craftspeople	69
Chapter 11	Memorials & monuments	84
Chapter 12	Murals	93
Chapter 13	Stained glass	99
Chapter 14	Cathedrals	113
Chapter 15	Oxford Movement	129
Chapter 16	Historical development	144
Chapter 17	Comments	155
	Conclusion	159

## Vol. II

### Appendix:

Buildings	1
Books, booklets & periodicals from LRW's former library	16
Williams's artists and craftspeople	20

### Bibliography:

Primary sources	32
Newspapers and periodicals	36
Theses	38
Unpublished material	39
Secondary sources	40
Church Booklets	51
Articles on Williams	53
List of illustrations	54
Plates: 1-91	



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude to the Williams's family, particularly Brian and Geoffrey Williams for their assistance, and generosity in supplying information and access to private papers.

I should like to thank Roy Prentice, who recounted his early years as Williams's only articulated pupil, and later as his chief draughtsman in charge of twenty others. I am particularly grateful to Blyth Johnson, a former partner, who has shared his first hand experience of Williams and offered constant support, answered numerous questions with considerable patience, and supplied countless photographs. Roy Simpson AO, and Peter Newell, who both trained in Williams's office, and became well known architects, supplied some excellent insights into his lengthy architectural practice, and kept in touch with, as Simpson said, 'that great man'. Peter Newell corresponded frequently and contributed a great deal of valuable material about Williams's work.

Generous assistance has been given by the La Trobe State Library staff, particularly Margaret Burnet and Lois Mc Evey. The Heidelberg City Library staff has met many requests for special books, and Lynne Esmore of Inter Library Loans. has consistently tracked down numerous obscure documents and provided valuable information. I wish to thank the staff of the Architecture Library, Melbourne University, especially John Maidment OAM, librarian, who has generously shared his extensive knowledge of Alexander North, and information about his subsequent partnership with Williams. Jenny Stuart of MacAdvice has offered helpful suggestions, and solved many computer problems for me.

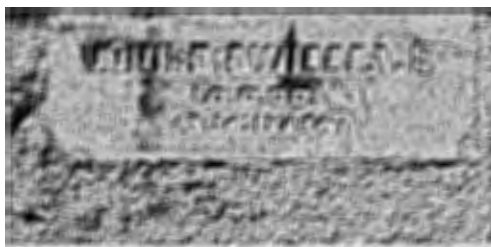
Clergymen who were consulted and knew Williams well, and admired his scholarship, gave valuable details about his liturgically correct churches. They included Archbishop Sir Frank Woods, Bishop James Grant, former Dean of St Paul's cathedral, Melbourne, and Father Geoffrey Taylor, formerly of St Peter's, East Melbourne, to name just a few. Mrs Lois Kennedy, archivist, Third Church of Christ Scientist, Melbourne (in Elsternwick), supplied copious archival material and photographs of the original church and its fittings, also Keith Corcoran, clerk, the Fourth Church of Christ Scientist, Melbourne (in Northcote).

I am grateful to Mrs Donne Simpson; Peter Sorel; Rosalind Landells and David Bick of the Brighton Historical Society; Frank Adams, Robert Prenzel's grandson; Mrs Carol Lancashire and Mrs Anne Sells, archivist, Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School; Mrs Judy Vandestadt, Firbank Girls' Grammar School, Brighton; Miss Jean Conochie, MBE, archivist, Lyceum Club, Melbourne; Archdeacon Frank Hetherington, Parkes, NSW; Dr Louise Trott, archivist, Anglican Diocese, Sydney; Reverend Rosemary Gillham, St Luke's, Woy Woy, NSW; Reverend Christopher Bird, St Stephen's, Adamstown, NSW; Reverend Ian Kerboeuf, Christ The King Church, Hillston, NSW ; Mrs Elaine Compton, St Alban's, Woodburn, NSW; Reverend G Foley, St Andrew's, Lismore, NSW; Reverend John Clark, St James's, Ivanhoe; Reverend Rosalie Raymond Hewitt, St Giles's, Murrumbidgee; Robyn Carter, St John's, Camberwell; Mrs Irene King, St Peter's, Box Hill; Dr Celestina Sagazio, senior research historian, National Trust (Victoria) and Roberta Hood; Geoffrey E Walker, Tessellated Tiles; David Fallshaw and Brian McCarthy furniture manufacturers, who furnished more than forty of Williams's churches, gave generously of their time and supplied copies of plans. Jack Mortley (formerly of Picton Hopkins) and Mrs Picton Hopkins were extremely helpful.

I would like to thank the following people for their advice and help. Father Dr Colin Holden, assistant priest and archivist, St Peter's church, East Melbourne; George Mitchell; Stuart Winston Hall; Reverend Dr John Anthony Moses, University of Queensland; Dr Ken Cable, University of Sydney; Mrs Gael Ramsay, curator, museum/archivist, School of Mines, Ballarat; Sister Elizabeth Gwen, archivist, Community of the Holy Name; Mrs Audrey Farley, archivist, All Saints', Canowindra, NSW; John Adeney and Dr John Fairhall, St Edmund's, Wembley W A; Alan Willingham; Dr Donald Dunbar; Professor Philip Goad; Dean Llewellyn Jones, St Boniface Cathedral, Bunbury, and Jim Cuniffe, Senior Lay Canon, Bunbury W A; Reverend Dr Max O'Connor, archivist, Uniting church, Melbourne; Lyall Kupke, archivist, Lutheran archives, Adelaide; Pastor R A Weir, Pastor Lloyd Bougher, and Pastor David Muller, of the Lutheran church, Henty, NSW; Dean Michael Birch, All Saints' cathedral, Bathurst; Judith Hill and Barbara Fallow, All Saints' Deanery, and Carol Churches, archivist, All Saints' cathedral, Bathurst, NSW; Mrs Maureen Olditch, Anglican Diocesan Secretary, Townsville, QLD; Peter L Wallis, Registrar, Anglican Diocese of Gippsland; Chaplain Murray Lund, St Mark's Naval chapel, Crib Point; Justine Osborne, Japanese Consulate, and Rosemary Annois, who gave me snippets about her artist father, Len Annois, and some of his colleagues, who painted at Airey's Inlet and knew Williams well.

I am grateful to my supervisor Professor Miles Lewis for his guidance and continued support. Finally I should like to thank my husband Hugh for his assistance with the photographs, and my daughter Wendy Currie, who accompanied me around various churches taking photographs, and spent countless hours repairing old images of Williams's earlier buildings.

## INTRODUCTION



Louis Reginald Williams was Victoria's, and probably Australia's major ecclesiastical architect of the Arts and Crafts tradition from the 1920s to the 1970s. At a time when churches were largely outside the realm of cutting edge architecture, he was able to maintain a traditional regard for quality, craftsmanship and architectural integrity. He produced fine rather than exciting architecture, but contrasted strongly with some of his more experimental contemporaries. He was a gentleman architect, liked and respected by other architects, practising to the age of eighty-six and becoming a landmark of the architectural scene.

Williams was born in Tasmania in 1890, where he attended school at Queens College, and was brought up in a strict religious environment. His father owned a large furniture manufacturing warehouse and hoped his son would take over the business. However Williams's great interest in churches led him into architecture, where he was fortunate to receive his training from one of the prominent architects of the day, Alexander North, who was Tasmania's Anglican Diocesan Architect.

Williams later became North's junior partner, and after moving to the mainland about 1912 they set up their practice in Melbourne. Ecclesiastical architecture was foremost in Williams's own practice and during more than sixty-five years in this specialised field he was responsible for designing numerous churches, chapels, vicarages, Sunday schools, kindergartens, and church halls. He also carried out some domestic and commercial commissions. For a lengthy period he was Diocesan Architect to Bathurst and Grafton. He was advisory architect to the Chapter of the Goulburn Cathedral, and designed buildings for the Dioceses of Adelaide, North Queensland, the Dioceses of Perth and Bunbury in Western Australia, Devonport and Railton,



as well as every Diocese in Victoria. He became the most sought after ecclesiastical architect of his time, and his churches are to be found throughout Australia.

The Anglican Church was Williams's major client, for whom he carried out the majority of buildings in Victoria. He also worked for the Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans and Christian Scientists. His commission was usually to design a church to accommodate a certain number of people, within a set budget. Discussions with the client included siting the building, which materials would be used inside and out, and the important issue of style. He insisted that he design all the furniture and fittings so that they harmonised with the architecture. He worked under few restrictions, but kept the client fully informed as the work progressed, advising on lighting, stained glass, metalwork, altar furnishings, church plate, wood and stone carvings, murals, opus sectile mosaics, floor coverings, &c. He was strict, but very fair, and no shoddy work was tolerated.

He has left a legacy of fine buildings ranging from small concrete and timber bush churches to large suburban brick buildings, including one cathedral and the completion of two others. He was a gracious man, whose first love was architecture, but he also had diverse interests, such as painting, photography and mountain climbing. He was well respected as a man who treated everyone with courtesy, regardless of their status. He never found it necessary to raise his voice on the site or in the office, and managed unsophisticated committees with considerable aplomb. The author was private secretary to Williams for four years until about World War II when much architectural work was suspended. He moved his practice from his Queen Street offices to his Brighton home and remained there for the rest of his professional life.

As no in-depth study has been made of his work to date, the present thesis aims to consider many of his buildings, and some of the innovations he introduced into his architecture to create a sense of space throughout the church, and a more comfortable environment for congregations in hot climates. He excelled in his designs for furniture and fittings and gathered around him a coterie of trusted craftsmen with whom he worked often and best. He earned the respect of his colleagues, staff, churchmen, builders, artisans and artists, and is remembered with affection by all those who knew him well.

## FORMATIVE YEARS



Louis Reginald Williams was born in Hobart on 21 April 1890, the only child of Ernest Alfred Williams and Kate Selina Williams. His mother was very artistic and encouraged his interest in all forms of art.<sup>1</sup> His grandfather John William Williams, c1805-1860, had formerly worked for the great London house of Broadwood, prior to arriving in Australia sometime before 1847, and became Tasmania's best piano manufacturer.<sup>2</sup> His two sons, George and Ernest, established the large wholesale and retail firm of Williams Bros. Emporium & Furniture Factory.<sup>3</sup> Williams was educated at Queen's College (now Hutchins School) Hobart.<sup>4</sup> An old classmate wrote 'his studious diligence was only exceeded by his ability to keep out of trouble ... any person who is given a paragraph in a Metropolitan Daily [sic] must be important, and one who gains a whole column little short of famous'.<sup>5</sup>

Williams was a very religious man, a devout Anglican and parishioner of St Andrew's church Brighton, but was not a bigot. He had a strict religious upbringing and continued to practice his steadfast commitment to Christian values in his everyday life and work. His family had close ties with clergymen, among whom were some of his closest friends, and his three sons attended a leading church school. He had acquired a profound knowledge of Christian symbolism and was steeped in ecclesiastical history, and with his penchant for designing places of worship, had committed himself to devising furnishings and ornaments befitting a House of God. He was conversant with the spiritual significance of the items he designed, and was able to produce ecclesiastical objects of great quality and beauty. He kept pace with changes of fashions in church furnishings and decorations, and though regarded by

- 1 Née Sutherland). Author's conversations with Williams over many years at both his Brighton home and Airey's Inlet, as well as tapes made in 1976 after his retirement.
- 2 K Fahy et al, *Nineteenth Century Australian Furniture* (Sydney 1985) p 131. He is listed in Hobart directories from 1847. Although his grandson (LRW) played the piano and enjoyed music, he was never a serious piano student.
- 3 Directories from 1890 list the firm as cabinetmakers at 49 Murray Street, Hobart.
- 4 Copy of account from Queen's College, dated 30 September 1907, included two shillings for sports and one guinea for typewriting, totalling £4.6.0 (LRW family papers); R.A.I.A. (Victorian Chapter) ref. no M 267.
- 5 Walter Howard to Williams, 9 April 1976 (LRW family papers).

some as a traditionalist, successfully adapted to liturgical changes in Australian churches, which were gradually introduced in the second half of the twentieth century.

His keen interest in churches stemmed from his early boyhood, when his mother, who was a particularly religious woman,<sup>6</sup> fostered his curiosity about church architecture by taking him on visits to Holy Trinity, Hobart, where he was later confirmed. He attended Sunday school and church, and when about seventeen joined Holy Trinity bible classes, where he discovered that his teacher and later friend Keith Norman, a Hobart law graduate, shared his interest in ecclesiology. They spent many Sunday afternoons walking around churches in Hobart, and he said, 'these outings reinforced my resolve to be an architect as well as stimulating my lifelong interest in walking'.<sup>7</sup>

Although his father had hoped he would carry on the family business, Williams said, 'he ... helped me to pursue the course to which I leaned, namely architecture'.<sup>8</sup> In 1910 he was articled to Frank Heyward<sup>9</sup> of Ricards and Heyward 'for in those days there was no school of architecture and I attended the Hobart Technical school to study building construction and architecture'.<sup>10</sup> The principal was Lucien Dechaineux.<sup>11</sup> Robert Haddon, who had originally set up the course in 1893, was later to advise his students at Melbourne Technical College to think out their buildings 'not in plan, nor in section, nor in elevation, but as a whole, a single entity'.<sup>12</sup>

During office hours Williams was taught drafting and making tracings on to linen from plans drawn in Indian ink, progressing to the preparation of drawings and finally to detailed working drawings. The evening classes were devoted to the more formal side of instruction in architectural styles and building techniques, and were augmented by his mandatory reading of Banister Fletcher's *A History of Architecture*, considered by many architects as their bible, together with A W Pugin's *The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*; John Ruskin's *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* and his *Stones of Venice*; J Nangle's, *Australian Building Practice*; Rickman's *Styles of Architecture in England*; also R A Cram's *Church Building*; Copies of these books and many others were among Williams's private collection.<sup>13</sup> He said 'when about halfway through my articles Mr Heyward noted that I was particularly drawn to ecclesiastical architecture, and had me transferred to Alexander North's office in Launceston. He was the diocesan architect in

6 According to the family, Grandma Williams was a strong minded woman.

7 Conversation with Williams.

8 Conversation with Williams.

9 Bishop Oliver Heywood, who lives in retirement in Richmond, is a grandson of F J Heywood with whom Williams commenced his articles. Conversation with B Johnson.

10 Conversation with Williams.

11 J M Freeland, *The Making of a Profession*, (Sydney 1971), p 261; A E Haller-Griffits, Lucien Dechaineux, in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* 8, 1891-1893, Carlton (Victoria 1981), pp 266-267.

12 J M Freeland, *Architecture in Australia*, p 237.

13 See appendix for Williams's former library collection.



Tasmania and a dedicated Anglican',<sup>14</sup> who fostered Williams's keen interest in ecclesiology. After completing his articles he continued as draughtsman, and in about 1912 became North's junior partner.

North had made arrangements to permanently leave Tasmania and informed Archbishop Lowther Clarke that he had secured offices in Phair's building, Collins Street, and would call on him 'as soon as practicable after my arrival as there are matters I am anxious to lay before you'.<sup>15</sup> This astute move no doubt helped gain many Anglican commissions for the partners, who built up a thriving practice, which specialised in ecclesiastical work, but also included commercial and domestic commissions. Their work extended to South Australia, New Zealand, New South Wales and Western Australia. The partnership unofficially lasted until 1921, although from 1916 Williams was responsible for most of the work. North, now in his sixties, commuted between Melbourne and Tasmania, until finally returning to Tasmania.<sup>16</sup>

Williams stayed in Melbourne, where he set up his own practice, specialising in churches, and subsequently became the most widely sought after ecclesiastical architect in the country. He designed chapels, schools, halls, vicarages, kindergartens,<sup>17</sup> houses, offices and more than 130 churches in locations all over Australia, and designed one for the Reverend Frank Coaldrake in Ito, Japan.<sup>18</sup>

He worked mainly for the Anglicans, but built churches for other denominations as well. He was registered as an architect in Victoria on 30 June 1923 having been in practice for nine years prior to that date,<sup>19</sup> and became a Fellow in 1930.<sup>20</sup> In 1973 he was made a life fellow of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects and officially retired in May 1977.<sup>21</sup> He lived at 'Nyora', 49 Bay Street, Brighton until his death on 27 March 1980, about three weeks before his ninetieth birthday.

Williams was fortunate in receiving his training from such an accomplished architect as Alexander North, who had travelled widely studying and sketching buildings in England and Europe before emigrating to Tasmania in 1883, aged 24 years. He was born at Northgate, Huddersfield, Yorkshire in 1858, the son of a linen draper. He had studied at both the Kendall and

14 Conversation with Williams. Before the chapel at Waterton was ready for use, services were held in North's home, 'Holmlea'. see D I Henslowe, *Our Heritage of Anglican Churches in Tasmania*, n d, p 68.

15 North to Archbishop Lowther Clarke, 7 March 1914 (SLV). North's Tasmanian practice continued as North, Ricards & Heyward.

16 He rejoined the partnership of Heyward and Ricards.

17 St Philip's Kindergarten, Mt Waverley is a fine example of a well appointed building

18 Conversation with Williams. Frank Coaldrake was chairman of the Australian Board of Missions at the time and the church was possibly a speculative effort designed to arouse interest in such a project. His son, Professor Bill Coaldrake said it was never built.

19 (Reg No 441). Williams's application was seconded by Philip B Hudson, Percy Oakden and John M Campbell on the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects' *Form of Nomination* 23 October 1924.

20 Conversation with Williams. Papers from R A I A (Victorian Chapter). Ref. No M 267.

21 Papers from R A I A (Victorian Chapter).

Lambeth Schools of Art<sup>22</sup> and according to Williams,<sup>23</sup> trained in England under Walter Tapper, surveyor of Westminster Abbey and architect to York Minster.<sup>24</sup> He also worked with James Cubitt, a well known nonconformist church architect, on his design for the Union Chapel Islington, London.<sup>25</sup> North won a gold medal in 1883, in the National Competition in Architecture, organised by the South Kensington Schools, for his design of a cathedral in an original Gaelic style. He was later to use some features of this design in several of his Australian churches.<sup>26</sup>

As a keen botanist, he wrote several articles including 'The Economic Aspect of Tasmanian Forests'; 'Notes on Tasmanian ferns', and 'The Forestry Question'.<sup>27</sup> Williams shared North's great love of the bush and some of his publications were found among his family papers. North's article on *Rural Churches*<sup>28</sup> related to wooden churches and in 'The Truthful Treatment of Brickwork', he advocated the greater use of brickwork instead of stone, and expressed strong views on the dishonest use of sham materials such as stucco, saying the 'thin coating of typical cement is but the mask which barely veils the fraud and deception of so many every-day transactions from a not too enquiring world ...'.<sup>29</sup> He had an excellent knowledge of ecclesiastical history, as well as being extremely well versed in heraldry.<sup>30</sup> He kept abreast of overseas trends and is known to have subscribed to the English magazine, the *Builder*<sup>31</sup> with its comprehensive coverage of contemporary and traditional architecture, and probably the *British Architect and Northern Engineer*.<sup>32</sup>

North was Tasmania's most innovative architect and the founder of its professional Association. He specialised in ecclesiastical work, combining High Victorian, Gothic revival and Arts and Crafts elements in some of his best buildings. He became involved in the Australian modern movement about 1895.<sup>33</sup> His keen interest in the Arts & Crafts movement is evident in many of the churches, including the interior furnishings and fittings designed in the North & Williams' partnership. These elements were clearly evident in influencing some of the best churches, large and small, that Williams later designed in his own practice.

22 John Maidment, 'Gothic Visionary', Unpublished manuscript. John has kindly given me permission to use this material, as well as some notes he has compiled.

23 Conversation with Williams.

24 *Who was Who*, 111, 1929-40 (London 1967) p 1325.

25 John Maidment, p 23.

26 Information from Maidment, who supplied me with copies of North's booklets.

27 For more details about North see chapter 'Arts & Crafts'.

28 Alexander North, *Rural Churches*, Launceston, n.d.

29 North, 'The Truthful Treatment of Brickwork', *Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science*, Hobart, Tasmania, 8 January 1892. Proceedings of sections; Section J Architecture and Engineering, pp 12-13.

30 This was manifested in the heraldic symbols he designed for his stained glass, metal, stone and timber (N&W papers SLV).

31 Conversation with Williams.

32 A copy of this publication, XVI (July to December 1881) London & Manchester, was in LRW's private collection.

33 Freeland, *Architecture in Australia* (Melbourne 1972), pp 193-4.

Trinity College Chapel, Parkville<sup>34</sup> was one of the partners' earliest church projects in Melbourne, in which the Decorated Gothic is skilfully interpreted in the Arts and Crafts tradition. Although originally designed for stone, which proved too expensive, the building was constructed in brick with some stone dressings.<sup>35</sup> The exterior comprises simple well proportioned masses with the superb western window piercing the west front. This is flanked by octagonal brick turrets, capped by low pyramids of stone, and the contrasting of plain with decorated surfaces of material and colour are the main elements of the composition. The flèche at the junction of chapel and ante-chapel is carried on reinforced concrete arches. It is in freestone and terminated with a copper spire.<sup>36</sup> The impressive interior comprises sheer brick surfaces and a brick-clad concrete-framed rood gallery 'sailing low across the chancel on a shallow pointed vault'.<sup>37</sup> Of particular interest is the phenomenal space throughout the interior.<sup>38</sup>

1 (a)

1 (d)

1 (f)

North believed strongly in the merits of the local timbers and said 'the roof principals were constructed in reinforced concrete and the whole of the super timbers used were of Australian timber (*Eucalyptus delegatensis*), which compares not altogether unfavourably with English oak, both so far as appearance and strength are concerned'<sup>39</sup> (the pews and fittings in the chapel bear witness to this).

North, who was steeped in ecclesiastical history, offered to supply the sequence of designs for the windows, with perhaps the exception of the east window, which should be 'devoted exclusively to the depiction of English or at all events, British Church History ... As the College of the English Church in Victoria, it is only seemly that English Church History should receive first consideration ... '<sup>40</sup> North's very detailed scheme was duly accepted by the Council.<sup>41</sup> Williams did the working drawings and being privy to all correspondence derived a great deal of information from this commission.

34 Then called the Horsfall Chapel. Memorial windows by Clayton & Bell from the temporary Chapel were transferred to the sanctuary, and two memorial windows commissioned from J Dudley Forsythe. The east and other windows were by Kerr-Morgan of Brooks Robinson. James Grant, *Perspective of a century; a volume for the Centenary of Trinity College, Melbourne 1872-1972*, (Melbourne 1972), p 9; Louis Williams collection (SLV); National Trust (Victoria) files; M Lewis [ed] *Victorian Churches*, p 55. The author was project officer for this 1991 National Trust publication; A copy of John Maidment's unpublished manuscript 'Gothic Visionary: Alexander North 1858-1945, Melbourne 1981 was given to the author to study. Caroline Miley, *Trinity College Chapel: an appreciation*, Melbourne 1997

35 The brick is typical of the Melbourne red brick which Williams claimed was the only brick available at the time. LRW 'Church Architecture in Australia', p 190.

36 *Building*, 12 February 1916, p 126-7.

37 M Lewis, p 55.

38 This is approximately 100 feet (30.48 m) in length.

39 North & Williams to Tristan Buesst, who requested photographs of the chapel and a copy of Carew-Smyth's report, for *Fleur-de-Lys*, 8 September 1915 (SLV).

40 North to Dr Alexander Leeper, 22 January 1917 (SLV).

41 'In reference to your kind offer ... to prepare plans of the windows of Horsfall Chapel ... I am now empowered ... to accept your offer and to put the work in hand ... as soon as possible (SLV).



Trinity College Chapel attracted favourable acclaim by P M Carew-Smyth.<sup>42</sup>

St Peter's, Eastern Hill hall complex, comprising the hall and school buildings is regarded as a notable example of North's work, especially for the way he set out to combine and integrate 'the scholastic and the ecclesiastic Gothic styles'.<sup>43</sup> In his design North explained that -

the style of architecture used is Early English Gothic ... and ... should have preference in all English church buildings. There are two great types of this style, the Scholastic, which was employed in college buildings and Devotional, which was used for purely Ecclesiastical purposes. The two types are not discordant and may with advantage be used conjointly. The front part of the buildings, showing the class rooms, may be considered to be worked out in the Scholastic type, whilst a more Devotional feeling has been thrown into the gable end joining the Church, so as to be in keeping with any future erections of a more ecclesiastical type'.<sup>44</sup>

Williams was able to draw on this expert knowledge when designing schools for the Anglican Diocese, in particular 'Firbank', 'Korowa' 'Mentone' and Ivanhoe CEGGS. He reconstructed the old assembly hall at Melbourne CEGGS South Yarra, designed in the North & Williams partnership, by dividing it horizontally to create the chapel of St Luke.<sup>45</sup> St Philip's kindergarten, Mount Waverley was the work of Williams & Partners, and Marsden CEGGS, Bathurst was one of the first interstate schools Williams designed.

2

3

4

North & Williams's ecclesiastical commissions, included St Andrew's, Clifton Hill; the parish hall of St Peter's, Eastern Hill; St George's Koo-Wee-Rup and many others.<sup>46</sup> At Clifton Hill, although restricted by existing bluestone walls, they introduced other materials,<sup>47</sup> which included the reinforced concrete tower. Of interest are the 45° turrets to the west wall; the wing walls/buttresses to the turrets, which hide rather than follow the lines of nave and aisles; the strong vertical lines of the tower and the horizontal headed windows in the south transept; while the nave windows are still in the Arts & Crafts mode.<sup>48</sup>

5. (a-d)

Their commercial and domestic works were all carried out with distinction. North, who was a master of Gothic, was inventive in the use of brickwork, and advocated some simple timber buildings for small country districts. He was progressive in the use of modern materials, and this influence manifests itself in much of Williams's earlier building and furniture, particularly in the motifs of native animals and plants in his exquisite designs.

42 Carew-Smyth was Inspector of Drawing for the Education Department, and had been actively involved in the formation of the Arts & Crafts Society of Victoria in 1908 (SLV).

43 F E Maynard, *A Talk About St Peter's, Eastern Hill*, Melbourne, n.d, p 8.

44 North to J Mills, 4 April 1912 ( SLV).

45 The Assembly hall was developed into a school chapel, a concrete floor being incorporated about half way, windows appropriately divided in height with the trusses &c adjusted. The development was envisaged by Williams, the lower portion being used for library purposes. Conversation with Williams.

46 See chapter 'Arts & Crafts' and appendix for the partners' other commissions.

47 The piers supporting the tower arches, and the tower itself were of concrete.

48 Conversation with Blyth Johnson. This impressive church was demolished in 1975.

North's advocacy of space and height, are apparent in his High Victorian Gothic churches in Launceston, Holy Trinity in the Perpendicular style and St John's, both buildings with which Williams was well acquainted. As North's apprentice he had worked on detail drawings for St John's and in later years was the architect responsible for some furnishing work on the eastern portion.<sup>49</sup> He considered these buildings, built of brick and stone, intensely interesting for their 'freshness and vigour in design and for their excellent detailing. They are majestic buildings'.<sup>50</sup> No doubt using this background, Williams was later to write an article about 'the explosion of space' and the impact of height experienced when stepping from the low-ceilinged narthex of a church into the soaring elevation of the nave.

5 (g)

5 (h)

As his true mentor, and a specialist in ecclesiastical work, North's influence on Williams appears to have been considerable. Although he was more than thirty two years his senior, he must have had sufficient confidence in Williams' ability to make him a partner, which enabled the younger architect to later prosper in ecclesiastical architecture.

49 Conversation with Williams.

50 LRW 'Church Architecture in Australia', *Victorian Historical Magazine*, no 154, vol 39, no 4 (November 1968) p 188. Brooks Robinson supplied some stained glass for St John's.

## OTHER INFLUENCES



During the formative years of his career, Williams was conversant with the important styles of Western architecture, and was able to reinforce that knowledge by studying first hand early buildings in Tasmania, and the mainland. These buildings reflect the various influences of English ecclesiastical styles, designed by architects, who had been trained in England and travelled widely studying and sketching buildings before emigrating to Australia.

Williams maintained that Tasmania 'possesses a proud heritage of Early Colonial architecture, both domestic and ecclesiastical'<sup>1</sup> citing Old Trinity Church, Hobart, built by John Lee Archer.<sup>2</sup> It is crowned by a beautiful brick and stone tower in a simplified Renaissance style, which reflects Archer's own architectural experience when working among London's Renaissance Revival churches. It is now used as a Court house.<sup>3</sup>

6 (a)

James Blackburn<sup>4</sup> designed Holy Trinity, Hobart in the Perpendicular style. It was deemed to be his best interpretation of the Gothic style, and had greatly impressed the young Williams. Blackburn's robust tower on the Congregational church at Newtown may have influenced Williams, who included many sturdy towers in his church designs. Of particular interest is Blackburn's treatment of the splendid Egyptianising Greek Revival tower

6 (b)

6 (c)

1 LRW, 'Church Architecture' p 183. For some fine illustrations on Colonial churches see M Sharland, *Stones of a Century*, Hobart 1952, p 32 ff. In 1958 Williams completed the clock tower of the convict built Christ Church, Longford, replacing the decrepit wooden top by raising the stone structure another 10 ft (3m), thus providing proper housing for the clock and adding to the beauty of the tower. see also E G Robertson, *Early Buildings of Southern Tasmania*, Melbourne 1970 (2 vols).

2 He was the colonial architect, who designed many notable buildings and bridges that have enriched Tasmanian architecture. See Roy Smith, *John Lee Archer: Tasmanian Architect and Engineer*, Tasmania 1962, pp 12-21.

3 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 183.

4 Blackburn was able to provide picturesque effects at very little cost, seen in his use of blind arches at St Matthew's, Glenorchy, and Scots church, Sorel. see James Broadbent, *James Blackburn 1803-1854* in Howard Tanner [ed] *Architects of Australia*, South Melbourne 1981, pp 31-37.



(1847) for St George's Battery Point.<sup>5</sup> His only definitely identified church work in Victoria is St Paul's church, Westmeadows (1850) built of squared bluestone rubble with simple branching mullions and a plain interior. It is a fine example of the Gothic Early English,<sup>6</sup> as too is St Mark's Fitzroy.<sup>7</sup>

6 (d)

6 (e)

Williams admired Francis Greenway, who enriched New South Wales with his colonial designs. St James's, Sydney<sup>8</sup>, in the late Georgian style, was built of sandstock bricks with sandstone foundations and string courses. Quite unique in colonial architecture is the nave floor resting on a vaulted crypt.<sup>9</sup>

Victoria's most distinguished Colonial Georgian building, St James's Old Cathedral, Melbourne, was designed by Robert Russell under the influence of Greenway and Francis Clarke of Sydney in 1839-42. The original project included a spire and was a modified edition of Greenway's St James's, Sydney. This building is the only noteworthy extant example using the sandstone from the south side of the Yarra, which characterizes prominent schemes of the 1840s.<sup>10</sup> Williams noted that the colour of the rock used for St James's, is much warmer in tone than the usual bluestone.<sup>11</sup> In the 1930s he designed some church furnishings for this building.<sup>12</sup>

6 (f)

Holy Trinity, Maldon (1861) was of historical interest to Williams. It is a good example of Early English Gothic, designed by D R Drape, who was a skilled stained glass artist and architect, before arriving in Maldon.<sup>13</sup> The church is attractive because of the combination of brown local schist, laid as squared rubble, and Harcourt granite dressing.<sup>14</sup>

6 (g)

Williams praised William Wardell's St Patrick's cathedral, Melbourne and St John's Toorak.<sup>15</sup> This English trained architect brought with him his wide experience of the Gothic Revival, which he transplanted into Australia.<sup>16</sup> He

5 Conversation with Miles Lewis.

6 It is of historical interest as one of Victoria's oldest surviving parish churches built on one of the original village reserves, surveyed by Robert Hoddle in 1838. Lewis, p 61. Blackburn's later practice in Melbourne was mainly carried on through his son.

7 St Mark's, Fitzroy, also in the Early English style, although officially by Newson & Blackburn, has all the hallmarks of Blackburn senior. Conversation with Lewis.

8 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 183.

9 Williams recommended M H Ellis's book on Greenway as rewarding reading. M H Ellis, *Francis Greenway: His Life and Times*, Second edition, revised 1953.

10 Lewis, p 46. Charles Laing added rudimentary transepts, and under the influence of Dr J F Palmer, an octagonal cupola, in place of the original proposed spire.

11 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 183.

12 LRW collection (SLV). see Freeland, fig 10.

13 E M Bradshaw (née Drape) 'David Relph Drape, artist, architect and glass stainer', biographical notes, MS 11107, Australian Manuscripts, La Trobe Library, Melbourne. The stained glass west window is one of the earliest works in Victoria of John Lyon, who was a recognised portrait painter and decorator, before coming to Australia, and became a partner in the firm of Ferguson, Urie & Lyon. He was considered at the time without equal in the colony. *Tarrangower Times*, 30 June 1861. See G Marie Moore, M A thesis, 'Antipodean Gothic', University of Melbourne, 1984 (2 vols).

14 Lewis, p 134.

15 LRW 'Church Architecture', p 185.

16 He became Government Architect in 1859, with the right of private practice, and worked mainly for the Roman Catholic Church.

designed churches that were invariably Gothic, mostly in the Decorated mode.<sup>17</sup> When discussing towers and spires, Williams considered those of St Patrick's cathedral ranked high for their graceful proportions,

7 (a)

however when the full length of the cathedral can be seen, one feels that if the tower had been increased in height, such would have resulted in a more satisfying proportion for the tower and spire as a whole.<sup>18</sup>

St John's Toorak in the Decorated Gothic style, is of bluestone with freestone dressings 'with carefully studied proportions of parts and masses ... (which) give grace and beauty to a simple exterior'.<sup>19</sup> From the 1930s Williams designed additions, alterations and many furnishings at St John's, in keeping with the spirit of Wardell's work.<sup>20</sup>

William Butterfield impressed Williams for his creative interpretation of Gothic forms, and especially St Paul's cathedral, Melbourne, which he regarded as largely Decorated Gothic, but incorporating some features of work he previously used overseas. He repeated the striped treatment he had employed in his Keble College Chapel, seen in St Paul's as bands of dark stone, contrasting with the lighter colour of the remaining stonework.<sup>21</sup>

Commenting on the tower and spire for this cathedral, designed by John Barr,<sup>22</sup> Williams considered it a 'rich and a splendid adornment, and in appropriate period Gothic, excellently detailed'. He surmised that

7 (b)

In the case of the central tower and spire of this cathedral, the proportion when seen from square on is satisfying, but when viewed diagonally from some distance, one feels that the spire would have benefited by an increase in height.<sup>23</sup>

He regarded the spire of Christ Church, South Yarra, as the most satisfying 'the proportion appears to be just right, the detailing sensitively expressed, and the merging of the tower and spire a triumph of happy union'.<sup>24</sup>

7 (c)

He considered Hobart was enriched by St David's Cathedral, and was one of the best works of G F Bodley. Designed in the Decorated Gothic mode, it is well proportioned and contains elegant traceried windows, some excellent

7 (d)

17 According to Freeland, Wardell's churches were inclined to 'squatness, heaviness and dullness', except St Patrick's cathedral, Melbourne. J M Freeland, *Architecture in Australia*, Melbourne 1968, p 127. St Patrick's is important for its impressive scale and masterly handling of space, as too, is St Mary's cathedral, Sydney built of dressed Pyrmont sandstone. The east end has an English plan like Lincoln and a French internal elevation modelled on Chartres, the design being Geometric Gothic.

18 LRW 'Church Architecture', p 187.

19 M Casey [ed] *Early Melbourne Architecture :1840-1880*, Melbourne, 1953, p 159. Wardell donated the plans for St John's, Toorak, which sparked controversy among Protestant architects, who considered he was ingratiating himself with Anglicans.

20 LRW collection (SLV).

21 LRW, 'Church Architecture', pp 185, 187. The irascible Ruskin described Butterfield as 'the striped hyena'.

22 A Sydney architect, who won the commission in competition.

23 LRW 'Church Architecture' p 187.

24 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 187. North & Williams were responsible for extensive carved furniture and fittings at Christ Church in 1915.

glass and a richly carved choir screen, considered to be the best in Australia.<sup>25</sup> Williams praised the firm, which was distinguished for the church designs competently expressed in Period [sic] Gothic Revival.<sup>26</sup> In 1947 he designed furnishings for this cathedral.<sup>27</sup>

He admired J L Pearson's Truro Cathedral, Cornwall, and his St John's Anglican cathedral, Brisbane, begun in 1901.<sup>28</sup> which he described as a 'noble and gracious Gothic edifice, completely vaulted in stone, and as such is the only overall vaulting of any church in Australia'.<sup>29</sup> The nave was extended by Conrad & Gargett of Brisbane,<sup>30</sup> and this work, which is still proceeding, harmonises successfully with the original design. Pearson was expert in vaulting, not often used in churches in his time, and the fine vaulting of his St Augustine, Kilburn, London, is particularly impressive.<sup>31</sup>

After arriving in Australia Robert Haddon worked first in Tasmania, where he set up the architectural course at the Hobart Technical College in 1893, which Williams attended during his training in North's office.<sup>32</sup> His work inspired Williams, who possessed a copy of his book *Australian Architecture* containing designs for churches in a free Gothic idiom.

He studied Walter Butler's work, and considered him an architect with vision and imagination.<sup>33</sup> Inskip & Butler's St Alban's, Armadale, is a splendid brick 'town' church built in 1898. It is successful in its design, with its lofty clerestory, chequer-board ornamentation in the spandrels of the clerestory, the arch and flanking turrets at the east end, the passage aisles and importantly the nave and chancel contained within a single vessel.<sup>34</sup>

Edward Maufe's Guildford cathedral may have influenced Williams's Bunbury cathedral. At Bunbury the apsidal ends to the aisles give interesting modelling, but the wide square tower diminishes the scale of the building,

25 LRW, 'Church Architecture' p 186. The pulpit, too, is another effective piece of furniture, being high, elegant and richly carved.

26 LRW, p 186. He related that in the early part of this century the walls of the choir of the cathedral revealed that a spreading of the roof was taking place. Following investigation, restoration work was undertaken by North in 1909, to stabilise the structure, by building into the shaped ceiling and roof space reinforced concrete arch-shaped beams in order to provide a static construction of roof truss members.

27 Williams to the Very Reverend Dean Fewtrell, 2 December 1947. The furnishings included canons' stalls as a memorial to Bishop Hay, a canopy to the bishop's throne and parclose screen, a low reredos to the chapel altar, and porch to the west door.

28 Comprising sanctuary, choir, ambulatory, transepts and vestries.

29 LRW, 'Church Architecture' p 185.

30 There was controversy whether the architectural style of the completion should be contemporary in concept, or follow in the Gothic spirit of the existing portion. In order to strengthen the stone fabric, some steel construction was incorporated into the building. LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 185. See Brit Andresen, 'The Cathedral Precinct: Ideal and Contingency' in *Fabrications, Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand*, (September 1994) pp 59-86.

31 Banister Fletcher, *A History of Architecture*, 18th ed. (London 1975), p 1165.

32 Haddon worked interstate before settling in Melbourne in 1899. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 9 (1891-1939) (Melbourne 1983), pp 154-155.

33 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 188.

34 Conversation with Maidment.

whereas the square central tower of Parkes, NSW, has a very different effect - a grand scale comparable to a Norman cathedral.<sup>35</sup>

Williams had a strong belief that the design of a building should 'clearly express its form of construction, and the materials used be truthfully handled, avoiding any appearance of imitation or falseness'.<sup>36</sup> Some of his buildings may tend towards heaviness, but there is no deception in his use of materials. John Paul said Williams was a great admirer of Frank Lloyd Wright, and suggested that his partner's architecture may have been influenced in part, by Wright's integrity and robust style.<sup>37</sup> In many of Williams's rural churches he used low overhanging roofs<sup>38</sup> and water tables that extend well beyond the walls of the building.<sup>39</sup>

Giles Gilbert Scott's monumental Anglican cathedral, Liverpool, made a significant impression on Williams,<sup>40</sup> with its free Gothic interpretation of the Decorated period. The very simplified Gothic was suitable for brickwork as well as concentrating on light and space, two very important components of his designs. He possessed a copy of V E Cotton's *Liverpool Cathedral*.<sup>41</sup>

7(e)

Williams observed that 'in the Liverpool Cathedral, we have an outstanding masterpiece, fresh, vigorous, twentieth century Gothic'.<sup>42</sup> This cathedral provided numerous examples of Scott's sophisticated late Gothic Revival furnishings, and reflects in some ways the evolution of ecclesiastical fashions during the past hundred years. Anson suggests that 'one can detect the remote sources - the teachings of the Cambridge Camden Society as to what was "correct" and "incorrect"... and that all these highly stylized *objets d'art* can be traced back to A W Pugin, by way of Bodley, Pearson, Street, and the

7(f)

35 Conversation with Johnson.

36 LRW, p 196.

37 Conversation with John Paul, of L Williams & Partners in the 50s & 60s.

38 Adams notes Wright's use of overhanging roofs for some of his buildings, which he suggests were not simply matters of stylistic whim, but provided excellent protection from extreme weather conditions. Steven Adams, *The Arts & Crafts Movement* (London 1987), p 88.

39 Conversation with Williams, who told a story against himself. After viewing his latest church, young son Brian said that one of his towers looked stumpy, but his father gently chided him saying, 'a better description would be sturdy'.

40 Conversation with Blyth Johnson (L Williams & Partners).

41 V E Cotton, *The Liverpool Cathedral : Official Handbook* (Liverpool 1924), p 26. Cotton argues that fortunately the Gothic style is peculiarly adapted to Scott's tendency to make changes as the work proceeded, as he has pointed out 'It does not allow you to complete the fabric before adding detail, as the detail is part of the fabric, the ornament part of the structure. It is not like Westminster Cathedral, where you can build a plain shell and cover it with marble and mosaics afterwards. Cotton p 26. Alastair Service maintains that Scott revised the plans, producing in 1910 virtually a completely new design, which was largely completed by the time of his death in 1960. The design went through many revisions, but the cathedral is now a 'far more powerful mass than Scott originally proposed and the interior possesses dramatically superior originality'. A Service, *Edwardian Architecture*, London 1977, p 84. Also see Scott's St Alban's, Golders Green, with its huge tower rising over the unusually large crossing, a similar feature used by Williams at St George's Parkes NSW.

42 LRW, 'The Spirit of its Architecture' Church *Chronicle* (Brisbane Diocese) May 1933.



architect's own grandfather, the immortal Sir George Gilbert Scott.<sup>43</sup>

Other important influences on Williams's style appear to include his close study of R A Cram's *Church Building*, with his preference for no east window over the altar, but lighting from high windows on side walls. Cram suggested a square sanctuary for a small church and a dossal reaching to the ceiling, instead of a reredos and glass, to avoid spots of light and dark. He pointed out that economy need not mean inferiority, but if perfect simplicity in design is followed, it is hard to go far wrong. Williams's lively bellcotes were seemingly inspired by Cram's illustrations in 'The Country Chapel'.<sup>44</sup>

It would be fair to say that Williams was significantly influenced in his formative years by studying the works and writings of the great architects of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

43 P F Anson, *Fashions in Church Furnishings 1840-1940*, London 1960, p 348.

44 R A Cram, *Church Building*, Boston 1914 (third edition), pp 13-32. A copy of this book formed part of Williams' library. See 'Arts & Crafts', St Nicholas' Mordialloc.

## WILLIAMS THE MAN



Williams's only articulated pupil, Roy R Prentice,<sup>1</sup> worked at the office during the day, with time off to attend architectural classes, and study for the Diploma of Architecture at Melbourne University.<sup>2</sup> Prentice recalled that he had access to Williams's widely diverse books, many of which Williams had studied himself during his architectural training in Tasmania.<sup>3</sup> Prentice also had access to magazines and articles to which Williams subscribed. After completing his articles and gaining a Diploma of Architecture, Prentice remained in his office, becoming chief draughtsman in charge of twenty draughtsmen, until the depression years, when he undertook more study at Melbourne University and then travelled to England to further his career.<sup>4</sup>

Prentice recalled that for his roofs Williams mostly used red terra cotta tiles, which had to be well burnt and were recognisable by their colour, however for his early buildings he frequently used slate. This was readily available, being carried back at favourable rates, on the return trip of ships transporting Australian wool overseas, however slate subsequently became too expensive for most church commissions.<sup>5</sup>

Prentice said Williams was one of nature's gentlemen, a great ecclesiastical architect, and a legend in his own lifetime. In the 1920s he had a large and

- 
- 1 A legal document was drawn up on 18 June, 1924 between the Reverend William Thomas Prentice, Roy Riggall Prentice and Louis Reginald Williams and £150 sterling was paid to Williams, who agreed to accept the "apprentice" as his pupil during the term of four years. (original in LRW's private papers).
  - 2 Williams had also worked in North's office as a student draughtsman during the day, and studied at night at the Technical school in Tasmania.
  - 3 These included Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture* ; Sir John Soan's *Classic Revival Banks*, James Nangle's *Australian Building Practice*; Pugin's *On The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture*; Banister Fletcher's, *A History of Architecture* , as well as R A Cram's *Church Building* and *The Substance of Gothic*; A Browne's, *Great Buildings and How to Enjoy them*, *Norman Architecture*; and R J Haddon's *Australian Architecture* , F Bond's *Gothic Architecture in England*, and T I Ball's *The Congregation in Church*, just to mention a few.
  - 4 Conversation with Roy Prentice.
  - 5 Prentice.

extremely well organised office, with detailed plans catalogued and available for every part of a building, including drawings for pulpits, fonts, &c. He considered Williams to be an expert in the Gothic style, and an architect who was prepared to be quite venturesome in design. He had a great knowledge of construction and an instinctive value of the quality of materials. He also had a great feeling for rounded arches and the Romanesque style, which he used very successfully in smaller churches. He was very much the undisputed boss and would pass work over to Prentice, for the preparation of working drawings and perspectives.<sup>6</sup>

In recognition of Williams's contribution to Australian architecture, the biographical committee of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, of which he was a life fellow, commissioned Prentice in 1974 to prepare a biography of him. The profile comprised eleven pages of text and some forty pages of photographs. As an accomplished photographer, Williams had compiled a vast collection of his buildings, spanning sixty-five years of architectural practice. Prentice used many of these photographs in the book, and said 'he felt extremely honoured to have been given this commission'.<sup>7</sup>

For a short time during 1929-30, when the Great Depression was in full swing, Williams took Gordon Lawrence Cockrell into partnership with him, but the arrangement proved unsatisfactory and the partnership was dissolved in November 1930.<sup>8</sup>

When Roy Simpson started his career in architecture in the early thirties, he began his training with Williams as a student draughtsman. He said at the time most students would have had to pay for that experience. He earned five shillings a week, and being a diligent student, had his salary doubled the next year. He attended evening classes at Swinburne, Melbourne Technical College (now RMIT) and later at Melbourne University. He said how much he enjoyed his years in Williams's office and the excellent training he received during those years. He stated that he was famous for the quality of his brickwork on his jobs, and 'examples of his brilliant applications of this modest material can be found in many churches and cathedrals'. He had great admiration for Williams, whom he considered was insufficiently recognised as a master of his art. He described him as 'an individual practitioner who did not follow the mainstream of popular architecture of his contemporaries, but developed his own particular style and achieved a remarkable output'.<sup>9</sup>

---

6 Prentice.

7 Conversation with Prentice. See Roy R Prentice. 'The Biography of Louis R Williams, LFRAIA, Ecclesiastical Architect', 1974.

8 The partnership was formed in March 1929 [RVIAJ, March 1929, p 27] Conversation with Williams and information from Roy Prentice, who was working in the office at the time. He said termination of the partnership was wise.

9 Conversation with Roy Simpson, whom the author and husband knew very well. He became a leader in his profession, received the Order of Australia in 1982, and was awarded the 1997 RAIA Gold Medal. See John Castles, "The Quiet Achiever", Roy McGowan Simpson, RAIA Gold Medal, in *Architecture Australia* (January/February 1997) pp 36-43. Simpson was considered by many as one of the best Australian architects of his time. He died suddenly after writing the A S Hook Address 1997.

Prentice said that Alan Bogle, a gifted artist, worked in Williams's office for a time and made many of the fine perspective drawings of his churches, which were often framed and hung on the office walls. Some were used as a block to produce postcards for church authorities in their fund raising drives. The firm of Bogle and Banfield continued a close association with Williams, who often required extra assistance to meet hectic deadlines. Another artist, Leonard A Bullen, also provided numerous perspective drawings, which were published in local and interstate papers as a means of fund raising.<sup>10</sup>

Peter Newell served his apprenticeship with Williams in the late thirties and was paid fifteen shillings a week.<sup>11</sup> He said that even after fifty years, he had total recall of some conversations - once when receiving a salary cheque he was informed, 'What I have left on your board is not exactly waste paper'. A conversation was overheard between Williams and the Sister-in-Charge during an inspection visit to the Church of England's Home for Wayward Girls, Cheltenham - 'Sister Agatha, if I were to ask you what that ugly piece of wood you have nailed to one of my beautiful verandah posts is for, I wonder what you might reply?' The sister said that it was to keep a long skein of wool taut, whilst they plaited the girdles which were worn around their habits. 'How interesting' said Williams, 'When I design you another building, I shall include a "girdle walk" and won't that term puzzle the archbishop!'.<sup>12</sup>

Newell said 'he would have to be the most courteous man I have ever met. His manner never changed, whomever he addressed - some were foolish enough to think that his gentleness would make him an easy touch, but it disguised a shrewd uncompromising little Welshman. Physically, he was the double of the then English comedian, Robertson Hare. He even spoke like him and was well aware of the similarity.'<sup>13</sup> One day Williams was grazed by falling bricks when mounting a ladder to inspect a tower, and was so upset by the incident that Newell was delegated to do the high inspections. He used strong binoculars while carefully watching proceedings, and nothing escaped his expert mind.<sup>14</sup>

In later years he referred many of his Queensland clients to Newell, whose firm Lund, Hutton, Newell was on Williams's recommendation appointed Bishop Shevill's diocesan architect for his building programme. Newell said "I have always admired Louis Williams's designs. Both his Queensland churches, completed by us some thirty five years ago, were far in advance of contemporary traditional forms. He agreed with the famous 'less is more' philosophy and was prepared to argue with unsophisticated church committees. For example, the simple triangular brick buttresses<sup>15</sup> at St Andrew's, Lutwyche ..." The west end of St James's Cathedral, Townsville, designed by Williams in 1957, was completed by this firm.

10 Conversation with Roy Prentice and LRW collection (SLV).

11 Conversation with Peter Newell.

12 Newell.

13 Newell.

14 Newell.

15 The triangular brick buttresses (Lutwyche) appeared as early as the period of North & Williams St Bede's, Elwood and the internal supports for the Trinity College Chapel organ loft. Information from John Maidment.



The draughting room was full of budding architects, many of whom have made their mark on the architectural scene, due no doubt in part to their expert training in Williams's office. Those of us who passed through his office recall his quaint sayings, 'How are you today, I am well thank you and trust that you are too' and in the office he would say 'If I were looking for that last letter to ... where might I be rewarded if I sought?' and likewise in the drawing office when searching for a rule, &c. he would pose a similar question. Hugh Moore served part of his architectural training<sup>16</sup> with him and remembers arriving at the office one morning to find a note attached to his drawing board. 'This is not a papal bull! Much as I desire a cheerful spirit in the office, whistling is not conducive to specification writing'.<sup>17</sup>

The author first met Williams as a student at Firkbank CEGGS where he was the school architect. Those years as his private secretary were quite memorable and very stimulating, as clients including archbishops, bishops, clergymen, Anglican nuns, school principals, leading businessmen, as well as other architects and engineers, came to view plans and discuss projects. When accompanying Williams on job sites to take notes, it was pleasing to observe the enormous respect he commanded. He was always very courteous to everyone on site. Specifications were frequently needed in a hurry and working back was not uncommon. He insisted on driving me home and handing me over to my parents. His old world charm was delightful.<sup>18</sup>

The subtle manner in which Williams coped with long-winded clients, never ceased to amaze the staff, showing them around his collection of photographs and perspective drawings on the walls, while gently steering them towards the door. He never raised his voice, was polite to everyone and had a wonderful sense of humour.<sup>19</sup> He was a caring employer who earned the lasting respect of his staff.

During the fifties and sixties a partnership was formed with Blyth Johnson, John Paul and William Douglas. Johnson said Williams allowed plenty of autonomy to the smart people in his office, and after doing a preliminary sketch and then listening to suggestions, would delegate someone to prepare the drawings and perspective, with very little supervision, yet still keeping a firm grip on the project. Nevertheless with some commissions, such as St Andrew's, Brighton, and St Boniface cathedral, Bunbury, he was quite obsessive and did most of the projects himself.<sup>20</sup> He was also a deeply religious man and this religiosity shines through constantly in his work.

He had an extensive architectural library and kept well abreast of modern trends in Australia and abroad, with subscriptions to local and overseas architectural journals, magazines, &c. He was engrossed in art and among his

16 Architectural students attended night classes at Melbourne Technical College and the Atelier, Melbourne University, there being no chair of Architecture then.

17 Author's husband.

18 The author enjoyed many holidays with his wife Mary and three sons, Geoffrey, Neville and Brian at Airey's Inlet, later building a house on land sold by Williams.

19 He mentioned that he could read shorthand, and one quickly revised desk notes.

20 Conversation with Blyth Johnson, of LO & Partners in the mid 60s & 60s.

collection were many books about artists and sculptors.<sup>21</sup> He interested himself in the work of local painters and artists, attending many exhibitions, and was very friendly with Archibald Colquhoun and his artist wife, who frequently painted at Airey's Inlet. Friends travelling overseas were requested to send Williams postcards of cathedrals and churches in the various countries they visited, and these cards fill several cardboard boxes.<sup>22</sup>

Elizabeth and Winston Stuart Hall worked with Williams as 'Architects in Association' on several projects in the fifties and sixties. They found him to be courtly and charming and were very impressed by his method of avoiding trouble when tenders came in too high - i.e. higher than the estimate! Hall said he admired Williams's churches, particularly his early Gothic buildings. He dined and wine with him every Friday evening at the Savage Club, and considered him one of nature's gentlemen.<sup>23</sup>

Reverend Father Geoffrey Taylor, incumbent of St Peter's, Eastern Hill from 1964-79, said Williams was the only architect who designed liturgically correct churches, with special attention to the depth of sanctuaries, the treads of steps and one who had an amazing understanding of things ecclesiastical.<sup>24</sup>

Beautiful brickwork was characteristic of Williams's work and he insisted on perpends being straight and joints full. The astute architect carried an old file in his car to test mortar joints on his buildings as the work progressed, and if he found hollow joints, or even worse!, if the brick cavity was carried behind the buttresses, making them entirely ineffective, he would instruct the builder 'I shall get you, if you will, to demolish the entire wall and do it again'. He used to say 'I don't want any more than is specified in the specification, but I don't expect any less'. He was firm, but fair, and contractors soon learnt that shoddy work would not be tolerated. One day a foreman asked him if some bricks, not fit for the front of the church could be used for the back, but Williams explained 'that there is no back to a church, every side, as well as the top and bottom, must be given equal treatment'.<sup>25</sup>

He was always conscious of the necessity for adequate on-site instruction and meticulous supervision. Reginald Clarke, a foreman bricklayer with Langdon Bros. and later Clerk of Works for L Williams & Partners, wrote '... The man himself was a thorough gentleman, who did not ever find it necessary to raise his voice, a strict disciplinarian. As an architect of church design I do not think he had an equal in the state ... (he) has left a wealth of churches ... If in the process of work alterations were necessary he was always calm but firm. He was a man of remarkable perception (and) in his later days he did not attempt to go up high, but used very good binoculars through which very little was missed'. He said that if any error in draughtsmanship was found he must immediately be informed. 'A man who trusted those he chose for

21 Blyth Johnson.

22 Private collection.

23 Conversation with Stuart Winston Hall. Correspondence between Williams and E Hall & Associates (SLV). Also see David M Dow, *Melbourne Savages: A History of the first fifty years of the Melbourne Savage Club*, Melbourne 1947.

24 Conversation with Reverend Geoffrey Taylor.

25 Conversation with Hugh Moore.

responsibility, was also one who would respect a tradesman.'

'I remember during the building of St John's Camberwell, when he, with the general foreman, had a problem with varying parapet thicknesses ... he sketched various freehand details and cancelled those I thought to be of doubtful strength, finally accepting the suggestion which I offered ... 'As well as he knew me, his manners were always respectful, it was always "Good morning Mr Clarke" ' 'To those whose work was substandard the name Louis Williams was a scare. I have known him to order a concrete floor to be taken up and an order given for that subcontractor to be removed, never to return. His remarks to me were ' "this floor had been done when out of inspection hours" ' '

Bishop Grant said that the official appointment of a diocesan architect had been discontinued, but even so, Williams had the highest number of commissions from the Anglican church across Victoria of any single architect. Grant explained that the Diocese did not dictate to the parishes on a preferred architect, but left them free to make their own choice.<sup>26</sup> In his parish the Australian vicar is essentially a constitutional ruler, with unrestricted power accorded to him in all spiritual and pastoral work.<sup>27</sup> Williams was always prepared to listen to clergy and laity, but parishioners were advised by the Vicar-General to 'secure the counsel of the architect so that nothing inharmonious shall be put into the church to destroy the poem in materials that was in his mind'.<sup>28</sup>

Williams had a fund of anecdotes which he enjoyed sharing. When he was redesigning St John's Anglican church, Mansfield of which the Reverend Robert Brown, an Irishman, was canon, Brown visited a Catholic woman in the district requesting help in the rebuilding project. 'Well canon, I would like to, but we usually don't assist in the erection of other denomination's churches' 'Then' replied the very astute clergyman 'would you consider contributing to demolishing our old one?' Williams recalled that she agreed to this without hesitation.<sup>29</sup>

Williams was highly regarded by the Anglican clergy and asked by the Bishop of Ballarat to 'give a talk on Church Art at the Retreat House, Cheltenham ... 'I hope and believe that your visit will have the effect of bringing about a taste for better things in some of our churches. Do come and help us'.<sup>30</sup>

26 Conversation with Bishop Grant.

27 H W Nunn, *A Short History of the Church of England in Australia, 1847-1947*, p 58.

28 Address from Vicar General in 'Church Architecture', *Church of England Messenger*, 27 July 1928, p 338.

29 Conversation with Williams.

30 Bishop of Ballarat to Williams, 28 March 1950 (SLV). Retreat House evolved out of the House of Mercy, because by 1946 there were no girls in care at the House, and it was considered an ideal place as a retreat house for the diocese. It was suitably converted and upgraded to accommodate not only Anglicans, but sometimes used by other denominations for the holding of conferences and retreats. In 1956 additions and alterations were made, and in 1963 a new chapel, sisters' chapel, chaplain's flat, and alterations to the existing buildings were constructed.

Williams had a motto on his desk 'Do not hurry. The thing is, start in time', but Brian said his father was rarely on time for social engagements.<sup>31</sup> He had many interests outside his architecture. He belonged to the Melbourne Photographic Circle, which had no constitution, no secretary, membership by invitation only, and was limited to about fifteen. Members would sit in a circle and put their works up one at a time, while others offered constructive criticisms, some of which, he recalled, were not always taken kindly. Dr Julian Smith, a keen and well known photographer, was also part of this group, which was interested in pictorial study and not just photographs. Williams exhibited two photographs at the Dr Julian Smith Memorial Exhibition of International Camera Pictures.<sup>32</sup>

He was for many years a member of the Athenaeum Club and Savage Club, where he met up with many professional men. These included artists and illustrators, such as George Dancey, cartoonist of *Melbourne Punch*, composers, sculptors, stained glass artists and mural painters, namely Napier Waller and Len Annois; musicians, especially Professor Bernard Heinze, singers, actors, photographers, doctors, lawyers, a High Court judge, Sir Hayden Starke, and many others. High profile politicians included an Australian prime minister, R G Menzies. Among club members were distinguished scientists, engineers and architectural colleagues, a close friend J F D Scarborough. Harold Herbert, the well known water colourist and art critic of *The Argus* was an Australian Official War artist, with over fifty war paintings in Canberra. Servicemen of the Navy, Army and Air Force were well represented. Once a year women were invited to 'Ladies Night'.<sup>33</sup>

Latvian born Karlis Mednis gave Williams instruction in oil painting.<sup>34</sup> One of his paintings hangs in the Savage Club and another in the Architectural Library, University of Melbourne. Letters of appreciation were written by Professor Brian Lewis, who said, 'Today I was in the Savage Club .... I was very struck by the number of architects' paintings of merit - of course, including yours'<sup>35</sup> and 'your picture is in front of me as I write, and very pleasant it is. Soon it will join the others in the (Architectural) library where it will more than hold its own'.<sup>36</sup> Williams enjoyed playing the piano, but was not a serious student, even though his grandfather was a piano manufacturer.<sup>37</sup>

When the lighthouse was automated in 1935, the Commonwealth Government sold land and buildings at Airey's Inlet. Williams bought the former head lighthouse keeper's cottage, which still commands an

31 Conversation with Brian Williams.

32 Held by the Tenth Victorian Salon of Photography, 1950. Conversation with Williams; Booklet of the exhibition, 19th to 19th September, 1950, in The Victorian Artists' Society Gallery, Albert Street, East Melbourne (LRW private papers).

33 Conversation with Williams. Also see D M Dow, *Melbourne Savages*, possum.

34 Conversation with Williams. Mednis also taught watercolour. In 1951 he joined the Victorian Artists Society, afterward became a board member, and teacher in the society's art school. He gained recognition as a watercolour painter and was accepted as a member of the Watercolour Association Club.

35 Professor Brian Lewis, School of Architecture, University of Melbourne, to Williams, 29 October 1969 (LRW private papers).

36 Lewis to Williams, 29 June 1970 (private papers).

37 Conversation with Brian Williams.



uninterrupted view of the ocean.<sup>38</sup> When he was not walking (he regularly refused a lift in a car, saying he 'was getting his constitutional'); reading, taking photographs or fishing in the nearby river, he entertained his friends. He enjoyed picnics with his grandchildren and friends alongside streams or on isolated beaches, always with a camera for those treasured snaps. He was keen on bush walking and mountain climbing and with his close friend Jim Albury, son Neville and some of his office staff,<sup>39</sup> spent pleasant weekends tramping over Lake Mountain, saying 'going out into the bush for two or three days with a pack on my back I would come back feeling I could argue with the League of Nations'.<sup>40</sup> He was married three times, being widowed twice.<sup>41</sup>

As a member of the Firbank CEGGS Council for over fifty-two years Williams 'put his great knowledge of architecture and of educational problems at the disposal of the school'<sup>42</sup> and as its architect was responsible for major works there over many years. The Louis Williams Hall<sup>43</sup> was named as a lasting tribute to him. He was an active member of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria and a member of the Brighton Historical Society, as well as a keen parishioner of the well known parish church of St Andrew's, Brighton.

Archbishop Sir Frank Woods in reminiscencing about Williams said,

I remember well, very early on in my time in Melbourne, that after dedicating a church Mr. Williams gave me, instead of the usual inscribed bricklayers tool (of which I have several!) a mallet beautifully made of oak, the handle hollowed out, and inside he had written a description of the church and its architectural points. The mallet is still in my possession and I prize it very much, particularly because I was a keen carver at one time myself.<sup>44</sup>

Brian McCarthy recalled making many mallets for Williams using the same wood as the furnishings in the particular church being dedicated.<sup>45</sup>

Williams was well regarded by his contemporaries, as indicated by Hubert Waugh, who had been office manager in Leighton Irwin's office, and was sub-dean of the School of Architecture at Melbourne University from about 1949 to 1969. He recalled that when he was an architectural student in the twenties, students made visits to tour Williams's latest buildings, because he was considered to be at the forefront of design, and the leading church architect of

38 Conversation with Williams. In 1919 the lighthouse was converted to automatic control. The Commonwealth sold the residences and other lots on 23/10/35.

39 Roy Simpson, Alan Bogle, Hugh Moore, Peter Newell and others.

40 Recalled by Hugh Moore.

41 Dorothy died from pneumonia, leaving him with two small children. Mary, his second wife of forty two years, died of cancer. Later he married Joyce, a family friend.

42 *Firbank Log*, 1923; *Church of England Messenger* (1923); Letter from Bursar, and Secretary to the School Council, Minutes of 21 April, 1970 (private papers). Williams was asked to give a lecture to the drawing class about architectural features of St Paul's cathedral, Melbourne, on 10 October 1958 (private papers).

43 The Louis Williams hall is currently being renovated and converted into a fully operational performing arts venue. Dr Jane Munro, principal, to author, 20 June 2001.

44 Sir Frank Woods in conversation with author.

45 Conversation with McCarthy, one of Williams's foremost timber furniture makers.

his era.<sup>46</sup>

Sir Frank Woods, when Archbishop, wrote to Premier Homer<sup>47</sup> in 1976, recommending Williams as worthy of honour by Her Majesty the Queen saying 'I suppose Mr Williams is the most distinguished ecclesiastical architect in Australia. In this Diocese of Melbourne, the parish churches of Brighton and St John's Camberwell are his and many others besides, and I have seen his churches in every part of Australia ... As I am not competent to speak about him as an architect, I am asking Mr George Mitchell to write to you about him ... Mr Williams is a man of the highest integrity, much beloved by his friends, and those who have had professional dealings with him'.<sup>48</sup>

George Mitchell<sup>49</sup> supported the recommendation saying 'Mr Williams is undoubtedly a most distinguished ecclesiastical architect and the extent of his work is prodigious. He practised architecture for well over sixty years in locations as far apart as Bunbury ... Townsville, and every part of Victoria...He is highly regarded by his colleagues, in fact he is something of a legend, and as well as producing so many fine churches influenced many men who worked as his assistants, and notably two who became leaders in their profession ... Roy Simpson of Yuncken, Freeman Bros, Griffith & Simpson and Peter Newell of Ford, Hutton & Newell of Brisbane'.<sup>50</sup>

Williams said that he had really loved his work, but in the next life he wanted 'to be a mountain climber and a skier. There's no money in church architecture, and the correspondence is just frightening. When you build a church you aren't dealing with one person, but a whole congregation'.<sup>51</sup>

The final tribute to Williams was the large attendance at his funeral in St Andrew's church, Brighton, where members of Duntroon Military College and Finders Naval Base (Westernport), were present. As well as his family, friends and fellow parishioners, there were many leading people in the architectural profession. Clergy from various denominations and Sisters of the Community of the Holy Name also attended. Representatives of the various church schools, large building firms, contractors and builders, artists, craftsmen and church furniture manufacturers, all came to pay their respects.

46 Blyth Johnson, said that architectural students are very critical of designs that are not of the highest standard, but were duly impressed with Williams's buildings.

47 Now Sir Rupert Homer.

48 Archbishop Sir Frank Woods to Rt Honourable Premier Homer, 27 September 1976.

49 He was curator of the fabric of St Paul's Cathedral Melbourne.

50 George Mitchell to the Rt Honourable Premier Homer, 12 November 1976. Williams did not receive an award, which like so many honours take time to materialise.

51 *Church Scene*, 15 July 1976, p 19.

## ARTS &amp; CRAFTS



Williams's involvement with the Arts & Crafts movement began with his training in Alexander North's office. He was Tasmania's most innovative architect and the founder of its professional association. He specialised in ecclesiastical work, combining High Victorian, Gothic Revival and Arts and Crafts elements in some of his best buildings. He became involved in the Australian movement about 1895.

In about 1890 several people concerned themselves with developing an architecture better suited to our climate and environment, among whom were Horbury Hunt, J B de Libra and Howard Joseland, who preached against the insincerity of the current fashions. Joseland stressed that the age old principles had been forgotten, and called for 'honesty in the use and expression of materials, attention to climate and the elimination of extraneous decoration'. Instead of disguising and falsifying an underlying form as the Victorians had done, decoration should grow out of the physical properties of materials, the techniques of working them and their structural potential.<sup>1</sup>

The aims of the Australian movement were similar to the Arts & Crafts Movement in Britain,<sup>2</sup> which was founded in the mid nineteenth century on the writings of William Morris. In the first issue of *Arts & Crafts* in 1895, the aims and objects of the Melbourne publishers were, using William Morris's words: 'To give people pleasure in the things they must perforce use, and ... pleasure in the things they must perforce make' ... also recommending that architects and craft workers 'give greater encouragement to the use of our

<sup>1</sup> J M Freeland, *Architecture in Australia*, Melbourne 1972, pp 193-95; p 213.

<sup>2</sup> Richardson notes that the vernacular became the prime concern of the English Arts & Crafts architects during the 1880s and 1890s, who aimed to free their work from historical styles. Plans and elevations became more utilitarian; local building materials were employed, which being close to hand, were cheaper and more in harmony with their surroundings. Details were styled on colloquial originals, and not taken from classical pattern books. These architects concerned themselves with craft work, and employed skilled craftsmen to enrich their buildings with ornament based on nature, and not imported decorations. Margaret Richardson, *Architects of the Arts & Crafts Movement*, London 1983.

national material ... and to show how the native flora and fauna can be adopted in its ornament'.<sup>3</sup> Architects of the time, such as Annear, Haddon and others, who were conversant with the ideals of the British Arts and Crafts movement, were anxious to promote these principles in a similar movement in Australia. The magazine helped raise the status of craftsmen and thereby expressed the influence of Morris, who endeavoured to restore the spirit of hand craftsmanship in place of machinery. His work earned him a very important position in the early history of modern architecture.<sup>4</sup>

Bruce Allsopp maintains that the basis of excellence is craftsmanship, and as all mass production starts from handmade prototypes, craft techniques are necessary in the assembly of building parts, with skilled craftsmen engaged to handle the materials.<sup>5</sup> Morris viewed architecture as the primary art form to which all others were related. He rejected the possibility of producing goods for a mass market, whereas Frank Lloyd Wright recognised the artistic and social benefits of machine production.<sup>6</sup>

North, having arrived in Australia in 1883, was fully conversant with the British Arts & Crafts movement,<sup>7</sup> and had become actively involved in efforts to promote the arts & crafts in Australia. As early as 1892 he delivered a paper entitled 'The Truthful Treatment of Brickwork' in which he observed that 'within the last twenty or thirty years a most marked revival of the applied arts has been progressing in England'.<sup>8</sup>

North argued against unnecessary features in a building, 'such as ... large cornices, columns serving no constructional purpose ... (and) any ornament or embellishment which ... suggests the employment of any other material, should be rigorously avoided'.

3 Publishers' Notes, *Arts & Crafts: Australasian Illustrated Magazine of the Home: Its Equipment and Hygiene* (October 1895) p 1. There were only three issues of this magazine, 1895, 1896 and 1898.

4 As Richards points out Morris set a fine example with his own house in Kent, the Red House, built in 1859 to Webb's design, using local materials. It was in stark contrast to the grand designs of many architects of the times, who favoured ornate imported decorations. J M Richards, *An Introduction to Modern Architecture* (London 1940), p 68. It was the first Arts & Crafts building, both in creation and furnishing, to result from cooperation between architect and artist. Also see E Cumming & W Kaplan, *The Arts & Crafts Movement* (London 1991), p 31.

5 Bruce Allsopp, *A Modern Theory of Architecture*, p 85.

6 Steven Adams, *The Arts & Crafts Movement* (London 1987), p 9, 42. Wright also realised some of his long-standing goals, by helping to further the production and distribution of well-designed and good quality furniture and furnishings for wider and less restricted markets, than had previously been the case.

7 Magazines such as the *Studio*, founded in 1893, disseminated information about the English Arts & Crafts Movement, together with its aims and products.

8 Alexander North, 'The Truthful Treatment of Brickwork', *Proceedings of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1892, pp 912-930. Paper read in Section J of the 1892 Conference of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, Hobart, Tasmania. This twenty-two page paper was later issued as an offprint.

He maintained that

there is more connection between art and commonsense than most people imagine, therefore if a building violates no principle of construction, participates in no imposture, is decorous in its embellishments, and truly serves the purpose for which it was erected, it can scarcely fail to achieve some artistic merit.<sup>9</sup>

He was a keen botanist, producing a comprehensive paper, 'Notes on Tasmanian ferns' in 1891,<sup>10</sup> and frequently incorporated native fauna and flora motifs into his ornamentation. He also wrote 'The Economic Aspect of Tasmanian Forests'<sup>11</sup> in huon pine &c. for building and furniture, while his paper, 'The Forestry Question',<sup>12</sup> argued for reafforestation.<sup>13</sup> He was Chairman of Launceston Technical School from 1907-10 and Vice-Patron of the Arts and Crafts Society of Northern Tasmania in 1914.<sup>14</sup>

As honorary secretary of the Northern Tasmanian branch of the Australian Forest League, North was a great advocate of the local timbers. In a report by John Little, Fellow of Royal Victorian Institute of Architects, to the Council of the VIA, he said

I am deeply indebted to our fellow member, Mr Alexander North of Launceston, whose ability to deal with the subject of hardwoods, and his willingness to impart knowledge, are both noteworthy features of my visit. No man in Tasmania knows more about the use to which hardwood may be put than he, and he uses them extensively in all works with complete success.<sup>15</sup>

North frequently made experiments with native timbers in order to make them suitable for joinery, that would not only preserve them, but reveal their character. He often used blackwood and Tasmanian oak, fumed in ammonia and wax polished to give a fine patina.

In his own practice, Williams instructed his craftsmen to rub the furniture down with white lime to make the grain full before polishing, then fumed with ammonia, which was insisted on by him, as it intensified the colour and enriched the finished product.<sup>16</sup> Like North, his widespread support of local craftsmen, included wood and stonecarvers, joiners and cabinetmakers, metalworkers and stained glass artists, and together with his use of

9 North, 'The Truthful Treatment of Brickwork'.

10 North, 'Notes on Tasmanian ferns', reprinted from *Tasmanian*, 7 November 1901, and later as an offprint.

11 North, 'The Economic Aspect of Tasmanian Forests', *Transactions of the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science* (Dunedin 1904).

12 North, 'The Forestry Question' (title page, date and publisher, &c missing).

13 'Reafforestation' reprinted from *Daily Telegraph* (26 February 1913), p 7.

14 John Maidment, 'Gothic Visionary: Alexander North 1858-1945', *Trust News*, vol 9, no 3 (September 1981), pp 10-13.

15 John Little, 'Tasmanian Timber, Suitability of hardwoods for use in Victoria: The borer trouble; An Architect's Report', *Daily Telegraph* (12 June 1913).

16 Although this method was no longer used by many firms, more modern treatments being in vogue, Williams's craftsmen were happy to co-operate with the architect, and admired the excellent finish invariably achieved. Conversations with Brian McCarthy and David Fallshaw, both prominent church furniture manufacturers and craftsmen, who worked on Williams's churches during many decades.



indigenous motifs, manifested his interest in the Arts & Crafts movement.

North's commitment to the movement is reflected in some of his impressive Tasmanian churches, particularly Holy Trinity Launceston and St John's, Launceston, where he considered his imaginative decoration as integral to the building. He used motifs of possums, eucalypt leaves and nuts, also native flowers and foliage. Some intertwined eucalypt leaves and nuts are beautifully carved on the reredos of Holy Trinity, while possums crouch among the Gothic pinnacles and crockets, on the choir stalls of St John's, and flowering gum and native fuchsia adorn the column capitals.<sup>17</sup> His house 'Holm Lea' near Rowley designed in 1912, reflects the influence of the Arts & Crafts movement, and contains fine examples of his furniture and fittings.<sup>18</sup>

5 (g)

5 (h)

His affiliation with the movement was apparent, when Dr Leeper<sup>19</sup> proposed that Clayton & Bell prepare the scheme for the memorial windows of the Trinity College chapel.<sup>20</sup> North said 'the desires [sic] for many memorial windows have passed through my hands, and I can confidently say that those executed by Mr Montgomery of Melbourne, have given more general satisfaction than those supplied by any other firm'. He executed many stained glass windows for him in both his Tasmanian and Victorian churches. North gave his reasons why the work should be done locally, and said 'past experience has convinced me that equal if not better results may be expected'.

- 1) The cost is less, as heavy duty is required by the Customs authorities.
- 2) The artist sees the actual building, and so can make his work blend with local colouring.
- 3) If the work is done locally, the full sized cartoon may be inspected and amended to suit the desires of the Donor or Council.
- 4) The volume of light is so much greater here than in England, that it is difficult for an overseas artist to appreciate, or make due allowance for Australian light effects.<sup>21</sup>

The local craftsmen had the advantage of being on the spot and able to cope with the light intensities found in our colonies and manipulate the glass accordingly, and so it was not long before Australian firms produced glass which not only rivalled that imported from overseas, but was less expensive. Williams continued to employ local artists and artisans, and even though confident of their skills, kept a firm hand on every project.<sup>22</sup>

Many architects, technical instructors, craft workers and educators, such as the

17 Caroline Miley, *Beautiful & Useful: The Arts and Crafts Movement in Tasmania*, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (Launceston 1987), pp 33-37.

18 Caroline Miley, *Trinity College Chapel; an appreciation* (Melbourne 1997), p 22.

19 Warden of Trinity College.

20 Dr Alexander Leeper to North, 6 January 1917 (SLV).

21 North to Leeper, 22 January 1917 (SLV).

22 McCarthy recalls that Williams, although familiar with the work of one of his best craftsmen, who had worked with the firm for forty years, always carefully measured and scrutinised everything thoroughly. see 'Furnishings and Craftsmen' above.

Victorian Inspector of Art, P M Carew-Smyth,<sup>23</sup> who travelled widely in Victoria lecturing and writing articles, had first hand knowledge of the British Arts & Crafts movement. This group of enthusiasts aimed to emulate the high standard of workmanship they had experienced in England, and to eliminate the need for imported fine and ornamental goods. Accordingly, the Arts & Crafts movement in Australia realised the need for better standards of training for workmen, in both wood and metalwork, together with an appreciation of the artistic aspects of their work, especially tuition in design.<sup>24</sup>

An important organisation, the T-Square Club was formed in Melbourne, mainly as a result of the enthusiasm to generate Arts & Crafts ideas, and to elevate the status of the artist-craftsmen. It was aptly named, as a T-square was an essential tool in architects', artists' and craftsmen's offices.<sup>25</sup> The club, which originated at the Working Men's College among architectural students, was founded in 1900 by Harold Annear. Robert Haddon, a skilful designer of architectural metalwork, was head of the architectural department at the College. He and Walter Butler were foundation members of the club, as well as office-bearers of the Arts & Crafts Society. They, together with John Little (a teacher at the College, and a founder counsellor of the Society), comprised the editorial committee of the *Journal of Proceedings of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects* in 1903. Haddon also edited the Working Men's College Magazine, *The College Quarterly*.<sup>26</sup>

The T-Square Club's motto was 'Truth, Beauty and Utility', and its main aim was -

- effecting a beginning in the study and application of 'Arts and Crafts'
- By papers and discussions
- By a library
- By lectures by persons other than members of the club, speaking as experts.
- By competition and prizes.
- By the annual publication of *The Square Book*.
- By keeping of a register of members requiring employment.
- And by visits to works and building.<sup>27</sup>

Annear pointed out that 'the club membership embraces ... artists, architects and craftsmen, as well as all who are interested in their work ...'<sup>28</sup>

The club brought together architects and skilled craftsmen, who were able to

<sup>23</sup> He had received a thorough education in art and craft training at the Belfast Government School of Art and Design, before arriving in Australia. He was connected with Prahran, Swinburne and the Working Men's College, and was foremost in the Arts & Crafts Society in Victoria.

<sup>24</sup> Caroline Miley, *Beautiful & Useful: The Arts and Crafts Movement in Tasmania*, p 13.

<sup>25</sup> Conversation with George Tibbits, who said the club still exists. Conversation with Philip Goad, who is a present member of the T-Square Club, which meets monthly at the Savage Club, Melbourne. A member nominates a specific topic, that is discussed at length during the meeting. A small silver T-Square adorns the head table. At present no women belong to the T-Square Club, but this may soon alter, because the Savage Club is an all male membership, and the venue would need to be changed.

<sup>26</sup> For further information see Caroline Miley, 'The Arts Among the Handicrafts: The Arts & Crafts Movement in Victoria (1889-1929)' PhD, La Trobe University, 1993.

<sup>27</sup> *College Quarterly* (April 1900) p 16.

<sup>28</sup> *Building, Engineering and Mining Journal*, 18 April 1903, p 83.

provide furnishings for buildings, particularly for churches, where large quantities of stained glass, joinery, stone and wood carvings, terra cotta and metalwork, &c. were required. Some forms of architectural decoration had to be repeated by manufacture, in particular, terra cotta decorations and extensive metalwork. The print media kept craftsmen, artists and the general public well informed about the movement.<sup>29</sup>

At first, most Australian architects tended to employ many of the same craftsmen as their English colleagues, but it was not long before local craftsmen and suppliers were producing work comparable to that of their overseas competitors. It was gradually realised that local craftsmen, like local materials, had their own particular advantages for Australian churches, which were not inferior to those from overseas. Above all, architects were better able to control work done under their direct supervision. Even working to an architect's detailed plan, overseas craftsmen did not always meet the high expectations of the Australian architect, and the work was often dearer.<sup>30</sup>

North and Williams patronised local craftsmen and manufacturers when building Trinity College chapel, ordering items from the Australian Tesselated Tile Company, Mitcham,<sup>31</sup> and special moulded bricks from the Northcote Brick Company, which they proposed using for strings and hood moulds [*sic*] at the chapel.<sup>32</sup> Williams continued a close association with this brick company ordering specially moulded bricks made to his designs for many of his churches.<sup>33</sup> Some of this firm's catalogues were in his private collection.<sup>34</sup>

Williams used a variety of bricks, in colours ranging from the early reds, tints, white, cream or even salmon, with interesting and innovative brick detailing, including his varied use of the bullnosed brick. His insistence on straight perpend and full joints was characteristic of all his buildings, and he

29 Newspapers in Victoria, namely the *Age*, *Argus*, *Herald*, *Melbourne Punch* and the *Australasian*, also some provincial papers, including *Geelong Advertiser* and *Ballarat Courier* were largely responsible for spreading information, concerning various aspects of Arts & Crafts buildings and their ornamentation, also current exhibitions. Scholarly articles were frequently published in *The Studio*, *Art & Architecture* and *the Building, Mining and Engineering Journal*, &c, by architects and others, who had personal experience of the Arts & Crafts movement in England.

30 G M Moore 'Antipodean Gothic', vol 1.

31 Tesselated Tiles carried out Arts & Crafts decorations on North's churches and chapels, and exhibited at the Arts & Crafts Society. Their tiles were used to great effect on one of Robert Haddon's buildings. *Argus*, 15 March 1915, p 10. Tesselated advertised their products widely in journals, newspapers, magazines, also, as seen in the early pages of Robert Haddon's *Australian Architecture* (London 1908), p xxviii.

32 North & Williams to Northcote Brick Co, requesting prices for special bricks made to order, 21 October 1913. Also correspondence between Dr Leeper, Warden, Trinity College and North & Williams, 12 June 1913 (N & W collection SLV).

33 Lists of specially designed window moulds and specifically designed bricks for his churches, together with many catalogues (SLV). Williams also patronised Stawell Bricks, Bathurst Bricks, Temora Bricks, Australian Tesselated Tiles &c. and other local manufacturers of bricks, timber, tiles and glass, particularly W Kerr-Morgan of Brooks Robinson. This firm had been employed extensively by North in Tasmania, and was renowned for its opus sectile work.

34 LRW files (SLV).

made the most of surface pattern and texture in his brickwork. He employed horizontal bands, and created patterns in raised bricks in the upper part of gables. The inexpensive clinker bricks with their natural rich colours and textures proved ideal for his novel use of brickwork, especially the reds and blues, further enhanced by warm terracotta quoins.<sup>35</sup>

In his later works he used cream bricks instead of reds and clinkers, and discontinued rendered walls as they showed up minor cracks, which would not be apparent in brick walls. He regularly used squints as moulding around doorways to form deep 45° reveals or over large windows, as seen above the west (main) door, ovolo at piers, voussoirs in arches over windows and doorways, scotia to form a dado or skirting in a run of wall or a base to piers, and hood mould to arches over windows and doorways projecting out from the wall face. These bricks were often specially made for him by the Northcote Brick Company, particularly a brick with his name pressed into it for insertion into buildings.<sup>36</sup>

87 (c)

Williams was responsible for completing the east end of St John's. Devonport with some excellent brickwork. At St Andrew's, Lutwyche, the modelling of the brickwork in the west front has a beautiful sculptural quality about it. The church was completed thirty-five years later by the firm of Newell & Partners, to whom Williams assigned some of his Queensland work. Newell remarked 'that he was well ahead of his time in the superb design'.

19 (d)

17

Walter Butler, who was foremost among architects anxious to promote the Arts & Crafts movement in Australia, read a paper before the RVIA, saying, 'as far as we in Australia are concerned, it is in the subsidiary arts appertaining to decorations, furnishings, fittings, ornaments, utensils and the like' that this movement has manifested itself. He noted that throughout the many branches of work that its influence had reached, whether in building design, furniture or furnishings, there was a uniformity of motive and sympathy, which seems to 'bear the stamp of something new ... a fresh thoughtfulness, emanating from a return to the study of nature', while adapting to the needs of everyday life, and more popular as a system of art 'than any system has been since the advent of the Gothic revival'.<sup>37</sup>

Although the Arts & Crafts movement had been mostly the preserve of architects, professional craftsmen and tradesmen up to 1900, women took an active role in Arts & Crafts Societies with the men, dominating these societies

35 Textured brick bands were frequently used, especially in St Stephen's, Gardenvale; St Stephen's, Darebin; St Cuthbert's, Brunswick; and St John's Brunswick West, while buttresses with herringbone detail are a feature at the Church of the Epiphany, Northcote, and St Stephen's church, Darebin. Other early churches in clinker bricks were St Silas's, Albert Park, and the Third Church of Christ Scientist, Melbourne (in Elsternwick). This innovation is interesting, as Williams considered that the use of clinkers in 1927 for ecclesiastical architecture was unusual, and thought St Stephen's, Gardenvale was probably the first church in Victoria for which clinker bricks had been specified (LRW tapes). Also see 'Church Architecture', p 190.

36 Conversation with Blyth Johnson.

37 Walter Butler, 'Modern Architectural Design' *Building, Engineering & Mining Journal*, 13 September 1902, pp 283-285.

in later years, with their own well patronised exhibitions, the first being in 1908. They excelled in many fields, not only in the fine arts, but wood carving, ceramics, bookbinding, stained glass and metalwork, &c. The women were able to engage in paid work outside the usual realm of employment accessible to them, and in some cases became the sole breadwinners in a family.<sup>38</sup>

Of interest is the forming by women in 1911 of the Lyceum Club in Melbourne, which had 'given professional women a rallying point', and which was dedicated to women who 'have published any original work in literature, journalism, science, art or music, who have University qualifications ...'<sup>39</sup> This Club was officially founded in Melbourne on 21 March 1912,<sup>40</sup> and was based on the London Lyceum Club, the forerunner of all Lyceum Clubs, which offered affiliation to women's clubs in the Commonwealth, if they adopted a similar constitution and ideals.<sup>41</sup>

Many of the churches erected by the North & Williams partnership were later to influence those designed by Williams in his own practice. He supported local craftsmen in each state where he built churches, and wherever feasible employed local producers of bricks, stone, tiles, ceramics, timber, metalwork and glass.<sup>42</sup> He believed in using materials close to hand, provided they met his high standard of quality, because they were not only cheaper, but harmonised with their surroundings.

Williams was fully involved with North's Church of the Epiphany, Meredith, designed in Arts & Crafts Gothic and built of timber, with a squat broach spire sheathed in sheet iron, and raised apsidal chancel. The spectacular interior contains walls clad in tongue and groove boards, a traceried chancel screen and specially designed wooden furnishings. The impressive exterior has been diminished by the loss of North's original colour scheme, in which the framing elements were picked out, accentuating the verticality of the tower.<sup>43</sup>

8(a)

38 For a detailed account of women craft workers in the various fields of the Arts & Crafts Societies, see Caroline Miley, *op cit.* Also see Lynn Walker, *A View from the Interior: Feminism, Women and Design*, London 1989.

39 'Melbourne Women's Clubs' *The Southern Sphere* (1 January 1911), pp 26-27.

40 Minutes of the First General meeting of the Lyceum Club, held at Brunton Chambers, corner Elizabeth and Collins Streets on Thursday 21 March 1912.

41 Membership of the Club also includes non graduate women who have distinguished themselves in art, music, literature or philanthropy, or who have taken a prominent part in education, and women who had rendered important public service. See Joan Gillison, *A History of the Lyceum Club (Melbourne)*, Melbourne 1975, for a comprehensive account of many well known women who have been involved with the club since its inception. The first president was Mrs Alfred Deakin, wife of the then prime minister of Australia. Her daughter and presently granddaughter Judith Harley, have all played a very active role in the development of the Club. 1123 members belong to the Melbourne Lyceum club, with reciprocal rights world wide, ranging from every state in Australia to Zurich. The author is a member, and is grateful to the archivist, Jean Conochie MBE, for her kind assistance.

42 The Northcote Brick Company made numerous bricks to Williams's designs during many decades.

43 Lewis, p 99.



Trinity College Chapel,<sup>44</sup> was one of the partners' earliest projects in Melbourne, in which the Decorated Gothic is skilfully interpreted in the Arts and Crafts tradition. All the furnishings continue this theme in the exquisite wood carvings of Tasmanian oak depicting Australian fauna and flora, reputedly by the wood carver Robert Prenzel.<sup>45</sup> and by the many stone carvings and ornaments by Mortimer Godfrey and W P Hutchins.<sup>46</sup> The altar rail in wrought iron was executed by the metalworker James Marriott, to North's design. J R Tranthim-Fryer, a leading figure in Arts & Crafts circles, made the model of the eagle for the wooden lectern. He also made the impressive memorial plaque, in an Arts & Crafts mode, honouring the Reverend G W Torrance, on the north wall of the sanctuary. Executed in copper, the top portion is an excellent portrait in three-quarter view of Torrance, while the dado contains hand-beaten lettering, framed with architectural ornament.<sup>47</sup>

The partners created a gem with their Arts & Crafts design for St James's, Point Lonsdale, a charming timber church, with shiplap board cladding, and an open bellcote with a dramatically flared broach spire capping. This building has since been defaced by bichrome brick cladding.<sup>48</sup> At the time, this church was considered to be of educational importance to architectural students, who were taken on a study tour to see it. In 1915 the partners were involved with extensions to All Saints' church, Newtown, which included a unique semi-circular apse, designed in Arts & Crafts Gothic. A south transept and spire were added later by Williams.

It is of interest to refer to a number of Arts and Crafts churches which were built during Williams's time. Haddon & Henderson's St Stephen's Presbyterian church, Caulfield North, is built in a mannered modern brick Gothic, embodying remnants of a traditional style which creates a bold and unique effect.<sup>49</sup> A P Coles's Methodist church, Carnegie is rather bizarre, combining an exterior of red brick, American Romanesque; English Arts & Crafts in the roughcast, and a pseudo half timbered gable, together with a North European, perhaps Baltic, gabled tower with a slender spire.<sup>50</sup>

44 The building was originally called the Horsfall Chapel. Dr Leeper had grand ideas for the design, which when costed would have been £20,000. J S Horsfall erected this chapel in memory of his daughter Edith, the wife of the Honourable Rupert Warrington. Horsfall regretted having offered the money, as when built, there were few funds left to furnish the interior of the chapel. Conversation with Bishop James Grant.

45 See T Lane, *Robert Prenzel 1866-1941: His Life and Work*, 1994; also see G M Moore 'Antipodean Gothic' p 120-127. for information about Prenzel's church commissions.

46 North to Mortimer Godfrey, 26 July 1915 (SLV). North was unhappy about the execution of the corbels and wrote saying. 'We are dissatisfied with your treatment of the interior carving at Trinity Chapel, especially the main corbels'. He also said the partners would supply illustrations showing exactly how the corbels were to be done and instructed him to 'proceed no further with this interior carving until you hear from us'. Dissatisfaction with Godfrey's work resulted in the partners taking the work away from him and giving it to W P Hutchings of Glenferrie.

47 The dado contains biographical details of G W Torrance, who was acting head of the College from 1872-1876. See 'craftsmen' for more details on J Tranthim-Fryer.

48 Lewis, p 144.

49 Lewis, p 64.

50 Lewis, p 65.

Rodney Alsop's St Mark's, Camberwell in cement faced brickwork, designed in Arts & Crafts Gothic is his only known church design.<sup>51</sup> Thomas C Payne's St Monica's Moonee Ponds, faced in freestone, is considered to be one of the largest and most impressive churches of its era.<sup>52</sup>

Cecil W Wood and R S D Harman, both of New Zealand, were inspired by the Arts & Crafts movement, particularly its emphasis on materials and craftsmanship. Their designs manifest the importance of a building harmonising with its surroundings, and its form and character developed out of good building practices. Wood's All Saints', Waiau, has walls faced with boulders obtained from nearby riverbeds, and a nave dominated by an enormous open timbered roof, a typical feature of his churches. Williams designed many churches with splendid open timbered roofs.

Harman's Church of the Good Shepherd at Lake Tekapo with its distinctive boulder walls and rough-textured plastered interior, was built in a convincing Arts and Crafts mode by local craftsmen using local materials. The font of Oamaru stone portrays some of the high country flora and fauna, in accordance with the principle of basing ornament on nature.<sup>53</sup>

Lewis notes that the Arts & Crafts movement had developed strongly in the late nineteenth century in Britain, whilst in Melbourne it was promoted by a small coterie of talented architects and craftsmen. These exponents of the movement concerned themselves with hand craftsmanship and the use of natural materials, which though desirable and skilfully made by talented artists and artisans, were nevertheless more expensive than the mass produced industrial products, and often beyond the reach of the average citizen. However, the Arts & Crafts Gothic proved splendid for churches, being more mediaevalising in origin.<sup>54</sup>

Williams handled this style deftly using traditional local building materials, especially brick, which had been elevated as a good natural material. He embodied the ideals of hand craftsmanship, with truthful expression of function, unpretentiousness and respect for the environment. Of particular interest is his design for St Nicholas's, Mordialloc, where the west facade is terminated by a lively bellcote in an unusual broken gable, attached to a wall with a commanding slope as a continuation of a flanking buttress at the southwest corner, achieving a forceful impact.<sup>55</sup> St George's, Flemington, is a flexible church-cum-hall, built of clinker brick with red brick and cement trim, harmonising well with its environment. Externally the jerkin-head

8 (d)

8 (e)

51 Lewis, p 63. The designs of the timber furnishings and fittings are very pedestrian. St Mark's was greatly affected by wetness and will still take at least a year to dry out. The foundations were also flooded (details from a parishioner and relative, whose mother's ashes were stored in the crypt until the memorial garden could be remade). To date no such disaster has been noted in any of Williams's churches.

52 Lewis, p 69.

53 I J Lochhead et al *Arts and Crafts Churches of Canterbury*, Christchurch 1996, pp 3-5.

54 Lewis, p 34.

55 This bellcote seems to have been influenced by R A Cram's *Church Building*, particularly 'The Country Chapel', illustration VI, but Williams' design has a more forceful effect achieved by the vigorous sloping edge.

gable extends over the bell and the rectilinear windows below, while internally the hammer-beam trusses and exposed brickwork recall the English Arts & Crafts style.<sup>56</sup> All Saints', Emu, is a small brick country church, with an open timbered porch and eye-catching bellcote.

8 (f)

One of his best interpretations of Arts & Crafts Gothic is St Stephen's, Darebin, built of clinker brick and red brick trim. The narrow slit windows and clusters of window lights are mostly trimmed with red bull nosed bricks, which he used often. The church has steep brick surfaces internally and externally, abstract masses, hollow arches, wide brick aisle arcade and modified hammerbeam roof principals, which reflect a style seen some thirty years earlier in Victoria. His version of this style is given a more modern feeling by 'the abstract massing with battered walls and spiky spire of the bellcote'.<sup>57</sup> St Stephen's is of architectural and historical significance, displaying excellent craftsmanship in the brick detailing and imaginative use of decorative bricks internally.<sup>58</sup>

8 (g)

8 (h)

Just as William Morris and his followers had tried to revive a genuine spirit of hand craftsmanship and pride in local materials, Williams turned to the native timbers of Australia and encouraged his craftsmen to use indigenous materials. He was adept in designing furnishings in the Arts & Crafts mode. St Stephen's Gardenvale contains some exquisite carvings of gumnuts, St John's Toorak is resplendent in carved motifs of native fauna and flora, and Bunbury Cathedral's throne<sup>59</sup> has a superb foliated canopy and carved desk.

Williams's use of the stylised gum leaf in his window tracery proved ideal for some of the stained glass windows, made for him by Christian Waller; while the stone cresting on the freestanding war memorial at St John's Toorak, illustrates another version of the gum leaf motif. His fine interpretation of Arts & Crafts is also evident in his picturesque parish and rural churches, window tracery, furnishings, memorials and monuments. He had learnt sound principles from his partner, and it could be said that Williams was possibly the last of the Australian architects to transmit the Arts & Crafts spirit well into the twentieth century.

56 Lewis, p 54.

57 Lewis, p 74; also National Trust (Victoria) files.

58 National Trust (Victoria) files.

59 This outstanding piece of furniture is not a sedilia, as C Miley suggests, p 249.

## OTHER DENOMINATIONS



Williams's major client was the Anglican Church, but he also worked for other denominations including the Methodists, Presbyterians, Christian Scientists, and Lutherans.<sup>1</sup> When working outside the mainstream of his regular commissions, he assiduously studied the liturgy of the particular church and its spiritual requirements, tailoring his design with true regard to the established correctness of that denomination.

The Peace Memorial Methodist (Uniting) church, Malvern, built during the North & Williams partnership, is one of their most original designs in the Arts & Crafts Gothic. Constructed of local red brick with precast cement tracery, it is of special interest for the ingenious use of brickwork, ornate window tracery, large sweeping roofs and bold massing. The impressive west end comprises a deeply soffited arch enclosing a large perpendicular traceried window flanked by massive brick towers.<sup>2</sup> This building was considered quite a departure from the conventional type of Methodist Church.<sup>3</sup> The interior furnishings made from local timbers were all designed by the architects.

9 (a)

One of Williams's early commissions was his winning design for the Methodist church, Canterbury.<sup>4</sup> It is, as David Bick points out, one of the most substantial early twentieth century Methodist churches built in Melbourne's suburbs, and like its peer at Seddon Street, Ivanhoe, approaches cathedral proportions. It is a reflection of the affluence of this suburb throughout its history. The church includes a chancel, which is unusual for a Methodist church, as well as aisles. In 1946 Williams added the central aisle, which was continued right through the building.<sup>5</sup>

9 (b)

1 See appendix for list of buildings.

2 M Lewis, p 76; John Maidment, 'Gothic Visionary' *Trust News* (September 1981). The interior furnishings were designed by the architects. After threat of demolition the Greek church bought it in 1982 renaming it St Catherine's Greek Church.

3 Graeme Butler suggests that this church, is similar in form and detail to the Decorated Gothic of Europe, and is a bold simplification of this style, and typical of the architects' work. See National Trust (Victoria) files.

4 The competitive design of the Methodist church, 10 April 1928, hangs in the vestry.

5 D V Bick, *Victorian Church Survey, Uniting Church*, Melbourne, 1990, pp 172-5, LRW collection (SLV), September 1928, 69 drawings, 1946, 4 drawings, UD/MCA2 Drg. 24.

It was built of clinker bricks with a dominant corner tower, synthesising well with the proportions and massing of the facades of the church, and an interesting play of light and shadow. The well coordinated interior is finished with textured plaster and a fine open timbered roof, while spaciousness is maximised by the ramped floor and tiered choir. Williams's primary concern was for good vision of the communion table and audibility from the pulpit.<sup>6</sup> The Glenroy Methodist church (1962-3) is a splendid example of modern Australian church architecture, with its low pitched roof and elegant copper spire rising from the roof to form a symbolic terminal.<sup>7</sup> The Sandringham Methodist (1958) and Cheltenham Methodist (1964) churches are also in a more modern mode. 9 (c-e)  
9 (f)  
9 (g-h)

The Presbyterians sought out Williams for several commissions. He built the Thomson Memorial Presbyterian Church, Ormond (1939). The tower placed in the angle of the 'L' shaped building adds distinction, while the interior is enhanced with a splendid open timbered roof.<sup>8</sup> Another commission comprised alterations, additions, renovations and new furnishings for the Toorak Presbyterian Church, where Williams requested Picton Hopkins to have the whole of the plaster ceiling 'finished to a sweet even curve'.<sup>9</sup> 9 (i)

The Finlay McQueen Memorial Presbyterian Church, Lang Lang (1936), has a roomy vestibule the full width of the nave. A deep recess is formed in receding planes at the end of the nave, housing the dais and pulpit, with the choir and organ chamber to one side. When making the Presbyterian emblem, the 'burning bush',<sup>10</sup> Williams gave specific instructions to portray a 'gnarled tree standing in a mound of grass and sand, the flames should be conventional, vigorous and emphatic and the modelling very robust, as the base of the model will be 24 ft. (7.32 m) above ground' and both emblem and cross to be of pressed cement.<sup>11</sup> The front elevation builds up with a series of vertical lines with the emblem incorporated in the upper part of the gable. 9 (l)

He described St Giles's Murrumbidgee (1933-4), as

10 (a-c)

rectangular in plan, and at the same time avoids an attenuated length and any feeling of remoteness, because of the large central space formed by the diamondwise transepts, which feature ... introduce a distinctive and fresh thought to church planning. He pointed out that transepts of this kind are logical for the reason that the walls slope in the direction of and parallel to the pews, whilst architecturally they would be

6 Conversation with Williams. Christian and Napier Waller fabricated several stained glass windows for this church. Williams's long lancet windows proved ideally suited to the very linear and vertical style employed by Christian.

7 *Spectator*, 21 August 1963, p 8. Blyth Johnson was fully involved in this church.

8 See appendix re other buildings for the Presbyterians.

9 Williams to Picton Hopkins, 24 September 1942 (SLV). Lenegan, did the carving on the choir stall terminals, reader's chair, steps and balustrade to the pulpit,

10 This emblem relates to God's appearance to Moses in a burning bush. 'And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and, he looked, and behold the bush burned with fire, and was not consumed'. Exodus 3:2. See Reverend A M Hunter, 'The Burning Bush; Story of the Emblem of the Church' in *The Record of the United Free Church of Scotland* (September 1929) pp 361-363. The Presbyterian Church of Australia uses the emblem in its seal, with the Latin phrase *Nec tamen consumebatur*.

11 Williams to the Modern Art Company, 26 November 1936 (SLV).



pleasing both inside and out, with their arches spanning onward and by so doing continuing and preserving the rectangular feeling of the interior of the church whilst externally the roof grouping would be picturesque, and distinctly a change from the usual transepts treatment.<sup>12</sup>

10 (e)

This substantial church is entered through a deeply recessed doorway over the archway in which is set a shield with the emblem of the Presbyterian church in mosaic.<sup>13</sup> Whilst avoiding unnecessary ornamentation he skilfully used brickwork, fine proportions and a corner tower, to create a pleasing effect.<sup>14</sup> Some splendid Christian Waller and David Kellock stained glass windows enhance the interior.

10 (d)

11

At Scots Church, Collins Street, Melbourne, Williams and W M Shields implemented renovations in 1941, which included recolouring the whole of the walls and ceiling.<sup>15</sup> In order to mark the church centenary in 1974, stone additions and alterations were designed by them. An oriel window was placed between two vestries to form a link between the minister's quarters and the stair hall.<sup>16</sup> This picturesque corner became an interesting feature of both artistry and utility, as well as harmonising with the existing architecture.

Williams made quite a departure from his other designs for the Third Church of Christ Scientist, Melbourne (1930), in Elsternwick.<sup>17</sup> Although he favoured the Gothic idiom for most of his work, he had a feeling towards the

12 (a)

12 Williams to the Board of Management, 17 August 1933 (SLV). Haddon & Henderson and Alec Eggleston unsuccessfully submitted plans for St Giles'.

13 The vicar wanted Williams's design altered 'the flames to appear more as a nimbus about the bush' ... and others wanted 'twice the number of tongues of fire and ... something that will look like a 'live fire', with the trunk straight and tapering off into the earth, instead of finishing dead'. Reverend A E Macdonald to Williams, 20 February 1934; J S Pollard to Williams, 20 February 1934.

14 Hugh Adams, convener of the Architectural committee to R H Griffith, Secretary, Board of Management, 30 September 1933 (SLV). 'If you are able to build to plan, you will have a very beautiful church. I have seen ... Mr Williams's churches, built for the Methodists, one at Malvern and the other at Canterbury, and both are very fine ...'

15 Panelled and traceried blackwood dadoes throughout the nave and transepts added dignity and enriched the interior. Commencing from a position adjacent to the apse and dais, the design of the dadoes was sympathetic with that of the existing portion, gradually simplifying in form as it carries around the remainder of the church walls. When the windows and door jambs and recesses are reached the panelling merges with these shapes, blending in satisfactorily with the architectural forms of the building. The doors present a special feature, being enriched with both pierced and solid tracery. Later additions were to be a new narthex screen and panelling in the vestibules at the southern end of the church (SLV).

16 Williams to Treasurer, Trustees, Scots Church, 16 May 1978; Fisk soundproof windows installed to reduce noise. Carpenters' specification. 'All timber ... to be thoroughly seasoned, free from defects, such as white ants, borer, large or loose or dead knots, &c. ... 'scantlings shall be full to size and perfectly straight' ... re roof over oriel - 'allow for sarking the top of rafters of oriel' (SLV).

17 Mrs G C Melhuish, Convener, to Williams, 22 August 1929; Williams to Melhuish, 23 August 1929; Meeting, 22 August 1929; Meeting 13 November 1929. Architects considered, included Bates, Peebles & Smart; Alec S Eggleston; Hudson, Wardrop & Usher and others. The report stated ... 'Mr Williams is recognised as one of the best authorities in Melbourne on Church architecture ... He has designed...many church buildings and Halls ... in Melbourne, country ... and interstate ... He is considered an Artist in his profession' (CCS Archives).

Romanesque, reflected in this design. He used many round-headed arches for both large and small openings, and his robust design placed strong emphasis on the wall as a enormous load-bearing envelope, designed before the introduction of portal frames. The asymmetrical edifice constructed of clinker bricks was arranged in varying heights, leading up to and culminating in the distinctive corner tower, which stands out as a distinguishing feature from any view point.<sup>18</sup> 12 (b)

Williams steeped himself in the Christian Scientists' religion. His design differed from the amphitheatre form of the early Greek styled churches, usually adopted by this denomination in America. The committee agreed that the design 'symbolised the high ideals and lofty aspirations of Christianity', while the architect's rationale was one of ascending thought.<sup>19</sup> He produced a fine two-storey building, comprising three main components, the Church, with ancillary offices, Sunday School and administrative offices.

Entry to the Church was by ground and upper floor foyers, and being of generous proportions, allowed easy access and after service discussion areas.<sup>20</sup> Terrazzo<sup>21</sup> was used in the ground floor foyer,<sup>22</sup> and the church auditorium accommodated 450 persons, with extra seating in the gallery.<sup>23</sup>

There is no altar as Sacraments are not observed in the traditional manner, and there are no choir stalls. At the ecclesiastical east end there is a recessed organ chamber and some distance in front of this a finely panelled maple rostrum with two built-in reading desks (male and female) Women play a significant part in the worship. They read in turn, passages from the Bible and Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*.<sup>24</sup> Vestries positioned at either side of the platform, contain a small sheet of glass in each door, so that at a given signal<sup>25</sup> both readers emerge together to their assigned positions. Williams said 'because both men and women are equal in this religion, it would surely meet with the feminists' approval'.<sup>26</sup> 12 (c)

In keeping with the beliefs of this religion, ornamentation was restrained.

18 Conversation with Williams and Roy Prentice, who was closely involved with this church, and as senior architect in charge of the draughtsmen, executed all the plans and detail drawings.

19 Extract from report 13 November 1929, (CCS archives).

20 Report from the Building Committee, 2 April 1931 (CCS archives). 'The design is artistic and most uncommon ... The seat of each pew is shaped slightly, and this departure from the horizontal will add greatly to the comfort of the congregation'.

21 In specially selected tones of soft grey with blue flecks.

22 Williams to Federation Granolithic Company, 23 April 1931, requesting the firm 'to be careful to use the sizes of marble in accordance with samples held at my office'.

23 This gallery was simply the clever utilisation of waste space that provided extra accommodation for an additional fifty persons, from a high vantage point.

24 Mary Baker G Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (Boston 1875) (USA 1971). This book is placed alongside the Bible as the source of truth.

25 A speaking tube was installed between the Readers' rooms (CCS archives).

26 Conversation with Williams.

However, the interior with its high ceiling,<sup>27</sup> fine open timbered roof, 12 (d) panelled dado, semi-circular Oregon trusses sweeping from floor to ceiling, and large arches (reinforced with steel) of transepts and crossing, had an impressive and dignified atmosphere. This was relieved by the mellow toned leadlight glass<sup>28</sup> diffusing a soft light over the whole, and harmonising with the softly textured plaster of the walls, the soft tones of the sanded surface of the arched interior, invoking 'an expression of peace and reverence.'<sup>29</sup> The lighting, both artificial and natural, was largely screened from the eye. The pews,<sup>30</sup> attached at one end to the dado, provided extra seating.<sup>31</sup>

The convener said ... 'our soloist stated that she has sung in many halls and churches, but never before with such ease as in our new church ... Speakers have also expressed similar praise ...' <sup>32</sup> Williams had designed an impressive building that admirably met the spiritual needs of the Christian Scientists, thanking him 'for his untiring interest ... understanding ... knowledge ... and artistic sense ...'.<sup>33</sup> It is peaceful and reverent ... '<sup>34</sup> and brings many nearer to an understanding of God'.<sup>35</sup> The convener maintained that distinctive blue face bricks were made especially for this commission by a large tile and not a brick company.<sup>36</sup>

The Fourth Church of Christ Scientist, Melbourne (1961) in Northcote is 12 (f) smaller than the Elsternwick church. Keith Corcoran, said the enthusiastic flush of the Christian Scientists in the 1930s was less apparent in the 1960s, adding that Northcote was not an affluent suburb.<sup>37</sup> The reading room at the front was designed by Leslie M Perrott, Senior, which was the only building on the site, and set the style for the new buildings in a commercial area. A small and narrow block with quite a rise to the back of the site presented some

27 Soundproofing was by means of the use of 'Ten/Test', both as a floor insulation and roof lining. The Victorian agents of this product wished to take photographs of the interior of the church. R S Couche to Miss Richardson, 15 June 1931 (CCS archives).

28 Design No.72 in Brooks Robinson's book of Ancient leadlights, 22 January 1931.

29 Williams to Melhuish, 10 July 1931 (CCS archives). Conversation with Lois Kennedy, clerk of the church, who kindly assisted me with archival material, and photographs of the interior, as originally designed by Williams. The building was sold to the Church of the Mystic Christ, and later to the Japanese.

30 The Committee requested that the pews be designed on somewhat similar lines to those at Williams's Methodist Church, Canterbury.

31 Administrative offices were accommodated on the upper floor, with rooms for the organist, soloist, ushers and clerks. The Sunday school was on the ground floor, and committee rooms, reading room, sales room, cloak and retiring rooms. (CCS archives).

32 Melhuish to Williams, 12 September 1931 (CCS archives). He appreciated their enthusiasm having met the special requirements of the parishioners, who claimed that 'it did so much towards making the work a joyous undertaking ...'

33 Melhuish to Williams, 26 June 1931 (CCS archives).

34 Final report from the Building Committee, 1 October 1931 (CCS).

35 Williams to the Building Committee, 3 October 1931 (CCS).

36 The tile company was not named, and incredible as it may seem, it was stated that this unusual order created a demand by other architects and builders for this special class of brick. Report of the Building Committee, 16 October 1930 (CCS archives). The number of clinkers used in building this church caused 'a famine in Melbourne'. The striking effect of the bricks was of great interest to artists. Final report, 1 October 1931 (CCS archives). Also conversation with Mrs Lois Kennedy.

37 Conversation with Keith Corcoran, clerk of the Northcote church.

tricky planning problems. The chief influence in the design of the church was, as suggested by Johnson, Pietro Belluschi's churches in Oregon.<sup>38</sup>

The interior complies with the liturgical requirements of the Christian Scientists, with its blackwood podium, two speakers' chairs and desks backed by a slatted timber screen. This motif is repeated on the speakers' desks and console organ. Special attention was, as in all Williams's churches, given to the deft use of natural lighting. Decoration is reserved, seen in the modest pews, furnishings, simple light fittings, plain and coloured glass windows.<sup>39</sup> This well designed cream brick building, was built along elegant simple lines, with the exterior patterning of the bricks adding interest to the facade. 12 (g)

Williams was responsible for the Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Henty, NSW in (1963).<sup>40</sup> The trustees, who examined several churches in Melbourne, said 'our general reactions were very favourable to the churches you suggested we inspect, and we feel confidence in your designing something which will be both churchly, dignified and suitable ... and we are particularly impressed with St Silas's church, and thought the concept of the sanctuary particularly inspiring'.<sup>41</sup> 12 (h)

The church is of portal frame construction<sup>42</sup> with feature walls at each end of the church of precast concrete, faced with white 50 mm thick quartz chips externally, secured to the brick walls.<sup>43</sup> Internally these panels are plastered, and indirect daylight filters in from both sides. Other walls are of Wagga cream bricks, both externally and internally. The roomy chancel contains the altar, with the symbol XP (*chi rho*) in bronze, the centre adornment on the the altar front. A large slightly tapered mural cross, with concealed lighting<sup>44</sup> behind it, is superimposed on the partially curved and plastered reredos.<sup>45</sup> Also two narrow windows, the full height of the wall, throw some light on this area. The pulpit is adorned on the face panel with a metal symbol of the 12 (e)

38 Conversation with Blyth Johnson, who spent five years in U S A. Belluschi's churches are 'models of elegant simplicity, sympathetic scale and carefully considered natural lighting, which greatly enriched the United States church building. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 19, U S A, p 116, 1962.

39 It includes Sunday school, board room, committee and distribution rooms, ushers and speakers' rooms, and lobby at rear of the church opening onto a covered courtyard.

40 Williams & Partners designed this church (now St Paul's Lutheran Church). When built it was much bigger than the other Henty church and the two amalgamated. The older one was sold to the Catholics. David Muller to author, 27 October 1996.

41 F W Paech, Secretary, to Williams and Partners, 14 May 1963 ; 27 December 1963 (SLV). St Silas's church, Balwyn, was designed by Williams & Partners.

42 In the church the portal frames and doors were painted a grey blue and all other paintwork white. Conversation with Blyth Johnson.

43 Williams & Partners to Siebels Bros. Pty. Ltd. (contractors) 26 July 1963 (SLV), advising that the 50 mm thick exposed white quartz and plain cement precast concrete panels, made by Vibracrete Industries, were ready for installation.

44 Fluorescent tubes.

45 Williams & Partners to K & M Duff Pty Ltd, 27 November 1963 (SLV) The firm was informed 'that the light thrown on to the wall behind the mural cross was not even, and this shows itself in a slightly darker patch up to the cross arm ... and the spotlights in the sanctuary are not angled correctly. Two to the altar should throw light on the front face of the altar ... the ones to the pulpit and font should be directed down to the wall of these objects ... ' The problems were duly rectified.

orb and cross.<sup>46</sup> The font placed at the front of the pews, is enhanced by a metal symbol of the dove, which serves as the handle.

On each side of the sanctuary, seven leadlight windows of richly coloured German antique glass, give additional accent to this area. The congregation seating extends to within reasonable distance from the wide communion rail. The organ is not prominent and there are no choir stalls as in Anglican churches, both electronic organ and choir are situated in the west end. A slightly raised platform is provided for the choir with seating for about twenty persons. An area of 1.8 m between the organ and back row of pews was requested for the easy removal of coffins.<sup>47</sup> A wide central aisle and side aisles lead into a large narthex opening off the north side of the nave. Artificial lighting is concealed in the framework of the building near the ceiling.

The building was carefully planned to suit the climate, with daylighting largely by means of clerestory windows protected by the eaves to minimise heat entering the church. In addition, ample openings by means of grilles were provided, which Williams used extensively in New South Wales and Queensland. His objective was to get a movement of air through a building in stuffy, heat wave conditions, as churches in earlier days rarely had opening windows or roof insulation.<sup>48</sup> These openable grilles may have been an original idea of Williams (at least in churches) but this may be difficult to substantiate. (However both Horbury Hunt and Robin Dods had concerned themselves with the question of climate and ventilation in connection with church design). The roof construction is very much in Williams's tradition, but the purlins sit on top of the portal frames rather than butted into them, in order to create a more effective feeling of space.<sup>49</sup>

An interesting aspect of the building is the inclusion of a soundproof crying room for mothers with young children, with a glass panel to the nave. Opposite the main entrance in the large narthex is a feature wall of blue grey Italian mosaic tiles, and superimposed upon it in bronze,<sup>50</sup> a representation of the Holy Spirit as a Dove, descending in a halo surrounded by seven stars and the geometrical symbol of the Trinity.<sup>51</sup>

The furnishings throughout are chiefly of mountain ash, with blackwood veneer to altar, pulpit, front screens to pews and hymn board, and made to

46 In Early Christian art the Lord was shown carrying the Orb of the world in His hand, and in later times a cross was added to the Orb.

47 F W Paech to Williams & Partners, 26 January, 1961 (SLV).

48 The ventilating grilles of brick in Henty are set low, with timber doors opening internally for closure in winter. David Muller to author 27 October 1996. These grilles are most effective, and the acoustics are very good.

49 Information and plans kindly supplied to author by Blyth Johnson, who was closely associated with the Henty commission during the partnership with Williams.

50 Williams & Partners to L Cherrey, House of Design Pty Ltd, Brunswick, 2 October 1963 'The work was to be set out as instructed in sheet metal, Florentine bronze finish ... all finished metal work to be lacquered and baked ...' (SLV).

51 The main purpose of this emblem was to create an atmosphere of worship as people entered the building. Lyall Kupke, Lutheran archivist, North Adelaide, to author, 17 September 1996. I am grateful to him for the information and pamphlets he supplied. Also Pastor Lloyd Boughen, former incumbent of the Henty church for several years.



the architects' designs.<sup>52</sup> Instead of an expensive tower, a 15.2 m high spire faced with copper and surmounted by a cross, supports a 760 kg. bell. It stands at the main entrance to the church as part of the frontal unit, extending to the east. Glazed doors and windows at the side of the church open into a pleasant garden courtyard, screened off on the outer side by a buffer wall made up of masonry blocks.<sup>53</sup> This area is ideal for after service discussion. The trustees had wanted a modern church, and were delighted with the building.<sup>54</sup>

12 (h)

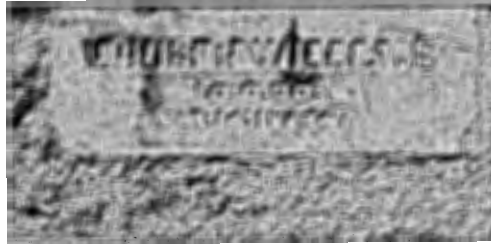
Williams was able to adapt his architecture to meet the needs of each particular denomination, producing well planned churches with high quality materials. He ensured that the people could see well and hear well, and feel comfortable in them, with properly designed pews and good lighting. Above all he imbued each church with a sense of tranquillity and a sacred character.

52 The architects were pleased with the work thanking the firm for 'the excellent work ... it all looked very well on the opening day'. The firm also made padded seat cushions for the pews and sanctuary seating, as the church is used for conferences and many other church activities, which often require lengthy sittings. Williams & Partners to Fallshaw, 17 September; 27 November 1963 (SLV).

53 Williams to editor, *Australian Lutheran*, 10 December 1963 (SLV).

54 Kupke, archivist, op.cit. Nave seating capacity is approximately 300.

## RURAL CHURCHES



In 1925 Williams was requested by the All Australian Church Congress to design 'A Type of Small Church suitable for Australian Bush Parishes', which was shown at the Church Congress Arts Exhibition. The pen and ink drawings were possibly made by Alan Bogle, a gifted artist on Williams's staff.<sup>1</sup> The design features generous overhanging eaves, a shady cloister on the north side, smallish windows and a square bell tower. This request coincided with a remarkable upsurge of religiosity after the First World War, and a growing need to provide churches in new country areas. Many churches were erected to commemorate the fallen, while existing ones were extended for the same purpose. Williams was much sought after designing buildings in the various states, and managed to transfer the simplicity and integrity of his timber and brick churches, to those he designed in reinforced concrete and concrete blocks. These small country churches, often built on a tight budget, are among his most charming buildings.<sup>2</sup>

13(a)

Williams was considered to be quite radical at the time for his use of solid concrete construction.<sup>3</sup> He said that before erecting a church of concrete, 'search for the characteristics of this medium of construction, then seize upon them fearlessly'<sup>4</sup> One of his early country churches, St Mark's, Nyngan (1920) was praised for its beauty and suitability for the climate.

13(b)

The church is quite unique, and although in the English Gothic style it is purely Australian in design ... The hooded verandah is something new, in a solid church, and is an attempt to meet the needs of the western climate, and at the same time give a distinctive beauty to the building ... It is a welcome change from many Australian churches, especially in the country, built after the pattern of a barn or a woolshed... and impossible for carrying out the service for the Burial of the Dead or a wedding in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer. This design is a bold attempt to meet

- 1 Conversation with Roy Prentice, who was chief draughtsman and recalls preparing preliminary plans and sending them to various areas all over Victoria and NSW.
- 2 See appendix for a list of Williams' buildings in the various states.
- 3 Williams's partner, A North, had a history of interest in reinforced concrete and was using it in a number of buildings around Launceston, before doing any work in Victoria. See Miles Lewis, *200 Years of Concrete in Australia*, Sydney 1988, p 12.
- 4 LRW 'The Spirit of Architecture', *Church Chronicle* (Diocese of Brisbane) May 1933.

Australian conditions, to retain the distinctive genius of English churchmanship and to achieve beauty, and we heartily congratulate the brilliant young architect on his success. As a memorial to the dead, such a church will be singularly suitable ... <sup>5</sup>

A charming village church, St John's, Merbein (1920-1), echoes his sketch for 'Australian Bush Parishes', with prominent overhanging eaves of gabled roof and porch, rather quaint windows and square tower.<sup>6</sup> Whilst restrained in design with minimal ornamentation, it contains richly carved Tasmanian oak furniture.<sup>7</sup> The sanctuary windows bear his characteristic stylized gum leaf motif. Although Merbein was claimed to be the first reinforced concrete church built in Victoria, there were earlier ones.<sup>8</sup> 13(c)

While concrete churches were relatively rare in the history of church buildings, they were durable, attractive and less expensive than brick or stone, and required little maintenance. Other churches in this medium, Holy Trinity, Darbys Falls, NSW (1923),<sup>9</sup> of concrete blocks, proved that bush churches could be attractive and environmentally compatible.<sup>10</sup> St Peter's, Broken Hill, NSW (1927-8), was built with 6"(150 mm) thick concrete walls, rendered inside and rough-cast outside.<sup>11</sup> St John's, Alexandra (1937), was considered by the then bishop of Wangaratta to be one of 'Williams's best small churches'.<sup>12</sup> The small country church of Holy Trinity, Whitfield (1934) has Williams's special openable ventilating wall grilles, which keep the interior cooler in summer. 13(d)  
13(e)  
13(f)

Williams was familiar with North's booklet *Rural Churches*, where he stated 'because a building must be erected cheaply, it does not ... follow that it should be absolutely hideous ... ' He deplored attempts to make a small country church look like a miniature cathedral, saying 'what appears appropriate and sublime on a large scale, becomes mean and ridiculous when reduced to the

5 Supplement to the *Nyngan Observer*, 26 March 1920. Williams recommended Montgomery as 'an artist ... who recognises the proper conventions in stained glass. Williams to Reverend E S Woolley, Nyngan, NSW, 8 April 1926 (SLV).

6 Reverend H C Russell, to Williams, 15 June 1940 (SLV). He said 'Merbein is one of the very best inspirations you have received for a little village church'

7 The talented woodcarver Robert Prenzel, carved the font cover in 1927, to Williams's design. Conversation with Frank Adams (Prenzel's grandson) and church records.

8 *Church of England Messenger* (8 July 1921). Methodist church. Carngham (1908-9) built of concrete blocks; portion of St Andrew's, Clifton Hill (1916), and All Souls', Sandringham (1920-1) were built of reinforced concrete. The latter was not constructed under North & Williams's supervision and failed to meet the high standards and attention to detail invariably associated with the partners' work.

9 *Church News* (1 April 1923).

10 Canon H Mirrington to Williams, October 1923 (SLV). The *Cowra Parish Paper*, (October 1923) noted that excellent material was available locally for making concrete bricks, which were hand made from a similar sheet of patterns for moulded bricks, including those for chamfers on end, squints, small bullnose, scotia, hood moulds, and plinth, chamfers on flat, &c.

11 H L Cotten to Williams accepting the tender for a concrete church (SLV).

12 He said 'the tower is conspicuous all over the valley ... It gives character to the town, which before looked rather meaningless from the hills'. The Bishop's Letter, *The Living Church*, XI, (2 September 1938) *Sun News Pictorial* (16 August 1938). Williams designed the furnishings made of mountain ash, supplied by the local timber mill.

scale of a toy ...' He rejected false practices in wooden construction 'all imitation of pointed stone construction should be ... shunned ... a pointed arch carried out in timber is a miserable sham ... (and) stamps the building as the work of an idealess [*sic*] copyist fit only to perpetuate that abominable debasement of honest construction known as 'carpenter's Gothic'.<sup>13</sup>

Williams proved that small timber churches need not be unsightly. The attractive wooden church, St Nicholas's, Werrimull (1932), constructed of sturdy timbers, has generous overhanging eaves to shade the walls, an enclosed porch to counteract the sun, and a splendid open timbered roof.<sup>14</sup>

Some of his small country churches constructed of red brick with terracotta detailing illustrate his skill in the functional and decorative use of brickwork. In St Martin's, Bittern (1921, 1935), brickwork was used effectively by balancing large plain areas with slender windows, and decorative turrets at each corner of the tower to enclose the short spire. While designing concrete and timber churches he was producing fine brick buildings such as St Paul's, Myrtleford (1932-4), St Paul's, Euroa (1928, 1962) St Mary's, Narromine (1927, 1960), St John's, Mansfield (1940-2) and later St John's, Lang Lang (1958). His last commission before retiring was the bluestone rock-faced War memorial narthex of St Stephen's, Portland (additions 1975-6).

Holy Cross, Mathoura, NSW (1936), is given a picturesque effect and protection from the sun with small windows, the generous overhanging eaves of the gabled roof, and a cloister shading the north side, a hooded baptistry, and lined open timbered roof.<sup>15</sup> Interesting features are the tower roof with wide spreading eaves, and the bracketed porch roof at the south west corner which ties in with tower roof in its design. The 45° walls of the sanctuary recessed externally give strong verticality, while the narrow triple windows in the sanctuary exaggerated its scale. This simple, humble church is lifted by some good design and detail.<sup>16</sup>

When designing extensions to St Margaret's, Mildura (1933)<sup>17</sup> Williams asked the vicar if he was opposed to a flat roof, saying 'a flat roof could be entirely satisfactory if properly built',<sup>18</sup> but this seemed rather too radical at the time.<sup>19</sup>

Working interstate often created problems, particularly at St Martin's, Mullumbimby, NSW (1923-4). The vestry were altering the design of various features, with much of the work being done unsatisfactorily by voluntary

13 A North, *Rural Churches*, Launceston, n.d.

14 This building echoes some features mentioned in the Merbein church.

15 Canon E J Rogers, to Williams, 22 August 1938 (SLV). 'The brick tower housing the bell, is a distinguishing landmark ... the church has splendid acoustics ...'

16 Conversation with Blyth Johnson.

17 New sanctuary, vestries, tower and ambulatory.

18 Williams to Canon A G Horner, 10 July 1933 (SLV).

19 The arcaded openings, north and south lead directly into the ambulatory, separated from the sanctuary by an inner eastern wall, arranged to keep the building cool with lower openings in the ambulatory walls for movement of air. Williams recommended Napier Waller for the stained glass. Williams to A G Horner, 14 September 1933 (SLV).

labour. There were difficulties with the bricks, and hood mould terminals were burnt in Melbourne and dispatched to the site.

Williams's stress is obvious, saying

no attempt be made to alter in any way the west front ... It is far more difficult for an architect to achieve restraint in a design than to enrich. Proportion, light and shade, with a pleasing architectural feature flanked by mass, is doubly enriched by means of a contrast ... I would advise you to ... accept the west front as designed ... when the work is finished I am sure that it will meet with your approval.<sup>20</sup>

The designated proportions, space and shape of his buildings were planned to form a harmonious whole, creating dignity and atmosphere, which should not be tampered with by untrained hands.

In contrast to the above interstate problems, Bishop Long praised the very original design of St Stephen's, Peak Hill, NSW (1928-9), saying, 'In Mr Williams, Australia has an artist whose name seems destined to rank with the foremost of Australia's architects ... This charming ... church is one of his gems'.<sup>21</sup>

15(e)

An early church St Andrew's Mayfield, NSW (1921, 1924), first built in timber, was later reconstructed of brick. The simple brick church All Saints', Canowindra, NSW, was partially constructed in 1927-8 in a modified Gothic mode, when the sanctuary, choir and nave were built.<sup>22</sup> It was subsequently finished to his original design. in 1959.<sup>23</sup>

15(f)

15(g-h)

St Barnabas's, West Wyalong, NSW (1936, 1964), has an open timbered insulated roof and internal walls plastered with a sandstone surface finish. The open cloister on the north side shades the nave, which terminates in a lofty tower, providing a prominent landmark Williams said 'I am glad you are pleased with the building ... architecture can be of definite assistance in worship for if a building can incorporate in its design that elusive quality of atmosphere, then such a building provides a helpful background for the priest's work'.<sup>24</sup>

15(i)

The Church of the Holy Innocents, Bourke, NSW (1939), was finished internally and externally with exposed red brickwork.<sup>25</sup> Church authorities chose the rather unusual internal buttresses providing greater space in the nave, at less cost, saying they would forego overhanging eaves in favour of these buttresses.<sup>26</sup> However, Williams advised that nothing must be spared

16(a)

20 Williams to A G Moore, 28 November 1924 (SLV).

21 *Bathurst Church News*, (1 January 1930); *Church Standard*, (18 February 1949); *Anglican*, (4 March 1950) SLV.

22 Williams to A G Brown, builder, Young, NSW, 25 January 1928 (SLV).

23. I am extremely grateful to Mrs Harley for her assistance, also the photographs and booklet she supplied. Audrey Harley to author, 27 February 1995; 8 May 1995.

24 Williams to Chairman, St Barnabas's, 31 July 1939 (contains 4 C Waller's windows)

25 It has double walling separated from the nave by brick arcading, insulated ceiling, special ventilating wall grilles and fully openable windows.

26 Reverend T Treadwell to Williams, 4 September, 1938; also advising that the nearest brick kilns were Hectors Brick Company Dubbo, and Baker & Sons, Parkes (SLV).



in the laying of the foundations to cope with the black treacherous soil conditions.<sup>27</sup>

The historic church of St Thomas's, Port Macquarie, NSW,<sup>28</sup> built during the colonial period, was completely renovated inside and outside in 1952. The rather tall boxed pews, causing a small child to feel shut in a box was overcome, whilst retaining the pews' historic appearance. By laying another floor in the pews, about nine inches above the old level, the child could see around him, and a person kneeling would not face a wall, but be in a position similar to that occupied by a worshipper in a conventional pew. 16 (b)

At All Saints', New Lambton, NSW (1959) he used a portal frame construction, which is more economical in thickness of brick walling and often in the foundation work, and lends itself to a fresh new appearance in design. 16 (c-d)

An architect should not be eccentric in his designing, but rather should be pleasingly original. He should make no attempt to show off, or to limelight, [*sic*] his design should be sincere, truthful and serve faithfully the purpose for which the building is being erected.<sup>29</sup>

St Luke's, Woy Woy (1958) is a very attractive modern church of steel portal frame. The slender tower suits the lighter style of the building, and wide eaves reduce the sun's rays entering the church. The clerestory windows are fully openable and provide good ventilation. Built of cream bricks externally and internally, the focus of the east end is the plain illuminated cross on the sandstone wall of the reredos. The acoustics are excellent, proven by the symphony orchestra's recent successful recital in the church.<sup>30</sup> Another slender tower was designed for St George's, Numurkah (1961). 16 (e-g)  
16 (h)

At St Andrew's, Lutwyche (1925, 1960),<sup>31</sup> the modelling of the brickwork in the west front has a beautiful sculptural quality about it, and embodies many pleasing ideas with doors under the arched openings of aisles opening outwards to supply a through current of air. Williams, who had prepared the original designs, was requested by the parish vestry to complete the church, but due to distance problems, he referred them to Ford, Hutton & Newell, who executed its completion. Newell said 'that Williams's overall design was years ahead of its time, and its character respected in my firm's doubling of 17

27 Williams to Treadwell, 5 August 1940. Black and white perspective sent to Pictorial Editor, *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, by Williams, 16 August 1940 (SLV).

28 As diocesan architect of Bathurst and Grafton, Williams made a seven day trip with the bishop in 1946 to Kyogle, Murwillumbah, Mullumbimby, Woodburn, Byron Bay, Grafton, Coffs Harbour, Urunga, Nambucca Heads, Macksville, Kempsey, &c (SLV).

29 Williams to Reverend Mervyn Nicholas, New Lambton, 6 September 1956 (SLV).

30 Conversation with Reverend Rosemary Gillham, assistant priest, who kindly supplied photographs, and answered several queries.

31 The sturdy louvred bell tower is an impressive feature, also the patterned brickwork. The square buttresses on the tower placed on the diagonal to form triangular shaped buttresses when they reach the walling of the church, were repeated in the simple triangular brick buttresses of the nave. It was begun in 1926, completed 1960.

the floor area'.<sup>32</sup> His simple triangular brick buttresses were repeated on the new extensions.

The small modern church of Christ the King, Hillston, NSW (1965), was built with steel framing and custom made concrete bricks, because it was in a white ant district. It has openable windows, and the furnishings highly varnished to lessen any infestation.<sup>33</sup> St Stephen's, Adamstown is of particular importance for its dramatic brick apse, which is quite unusual, and highlights the priority of the sanctuary, the most sacred area of the church, and the importance of articulating the whole building in relation to that particular space. This church was built in three stages, first, the apsidal east end and chancel in 1953; next the west end in 1959, and finally, the nave, chapel and vestries connecting the two parts in 1973.

18 (a-e)

18 (g)

18 (h)

All Saints', Trangie (1935, 1939), was one of his first churches completed in the Bathurst Diocese. The Rt Reverend Bishop Lomas Wylde informed his vicars of the imminent visit of the diocesan architect, and devised an itinerary to meet with as many people as possible, and enable rectors in scattered parishes to discuss any of their problems with Williams.<sup>34</sup>

In the days of few air services to remote areas, especially the large Parish of Bourke, Williams frequently had long train journeys, and on frosty nights would wait curled up in a rug at station junctions. He said that he never ceased to be amazed by the determination and courage of parishioners and rectors, who raised funds for their churches in these isolated rural regions.<sup>35</sup>

32 Peter E Newell to author, 7 December 1994. The North Queensland branch office partners Black and Paulsen, ultimately brought the work to completion.

33 Conversation with rector of the parish of Hillston, Reverend Ian Kerboeuf, who kindly supplied the author with photographs and drawings of the church. It replaced the previous wooden church which had been completely ruined by termites.

34 The Bishop's letter, Bishops court, Bathurst, 1 April 1952. Bishop Wylde drove Williams to Woodstock, Canowindra, Eugowra, Parkes, Forbes, Mendooran, Dunedoo, Coolah, Cowra, West Wyalong, Tallimba and many other parishes (SLV).

35 Conversation with Williams.

## SUBURBAN CHURCHES



Williams believed Australia was fortunate in having many competent architects, who had trained in England and were familiar with the Gothic Revival style of Pugin, but although he praised their work, he believed many of them particularly 'lacked the spark of originality and freshness of conception' of the Gothic styles they revived.<sup>1</sup> The early years of the twentieth century ushered in a new development - though still with a Gothic flavour - and a more ingenious and personal quality emerged. However he realised the potential risks in design without firm guidelines.<sup>2</sup> In his own buildings he continually strove for originality, and together with his thorough training and experience gained with North, was able to adapt traditional Gothic styles to the ecclesiastical needs of the twentieth century with designs best suited to the environment. Some of his early work included St Paul's, Ascot Vale; canopied cresting at St Stephen's, Portland; St John's vicarage, Healesville; St David's Moorabbin; Christ Church, Ormond and St James's, Ivanhoe.

20

When specifying bricks for St Stephen's, Gardenvale, Williams decided against using plain red bricks, and stone was too costly. He noted the pleasing effect of clinker bricks used by a local builder in nearby houses, and believed that the artistic quality of his design might be enhanced by the introduction of these richly coloured and textured bricks. Moreover, they were inexpensive, as he said, 'clinkers - these the brick makers just cast away as rubbish'.<sup>3</sup> However Miles Lewis points out, 'clinker bricks were now being specially made and promoted, and already extensively used in flats and houses.'<sup>4</sup> St Stephen's was designed to include a Norman tower, which has not been built.

21(a)

Williams always designed with foresight, demonstrated by his article in the parish paper, which he hoped would be helpful in the future.

1 LRW, 'Church Architecture in Australia', p 184.

2 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 188.

3 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 190. St Silas's, Albert Park was also built of clinkers.

4 Information from Dr Miles Lewis.

In view of the need for economy at the time that St Stephen's Church was built, certain parts of the structure of the building were conceived in a manner that would permit of improvements being effected as opportunity offered. When such works are undertaken in enriching the interior, it is of the utmost importance that a clear conception should be held and abided by, this being that there should be a quiet and definite rhythm, leading the eye towards the culminating point, namely, the Sanctuary. All new appointments made to the Nave and Chancel should be of such a nature that they do not distract or draw undue attention to themselves, that is, they should be kept subsidiary to the Altar and Reredos.<sup>5</sup>

At St Paul's, Caulfield, he introduced square-headed windows in order to admit more light into the church, but found it difficult to convince parishioners to accept these windows, thought to be the first such windows in a Victorian church. It was felt that if the arches were not acutely pointed, somehow the building would not convey a feeling of its being a church. However, he compromised by designing the arches to a low segmental shape. He suggested that where buttresses were needed, rather than have the wall between them flush with the inside face, which was the customary position, he built the intervening wall between them to finish level with that of the outer face of the buttresses, providing extra space in the nave and revealing the portion of the building that actually supports the roof trusses.<sup>6</sup> The tower, connected by a short cloister, is detached from the church, and was carefully planned to be the central axis on the main access of Glenferrie Road, while the cloister facing north keeps the sun off the wall during the heat of the day.<sup>7</sup>

21 (b)

Williams remarked that as the site was especially an important one, forming as it does a terminal to the vista along Glenferrie Road, every effort should be made in presenting a facade that would be dignified and monumental in effect, 'such an effect I have striven to achieve' saying. he was 'happy both with the development of the plan and the design'.<sup>8</sup> The entire front of the church was planned as an extensive narthex to act as a buffer against road noises and protect the interior from hot north winds, while internally there is a sense of space and mystery. He used the simple brick work of toned textured bricks to advantage, without architectural decorations, and deftly designed the large brick mural cross on the wall, which relies on delicate lines of shadow of the raised bricks to define its form.<sup>9</sup>

21 (c)

21 (e)

5 *St Stephen's Gardenvale, Parish Paper* (January 1948). LRW private papers. Napier Waller, was responsible for the reredos mural panels in the Warriors' chapel in 1961 and later windows in 1964 and 1970. Williams designed the exquisite Arts & Crafts carvings of gumnuts, &c executed on the choir stalls and in the sanctuary.

6 Conversation with Williams, who repeated this at the church of the Holy Innocents, Bourke, NSW, other churches, and the Australian Naval War Memorial Chapel, Crib Point. He gave strict instructions to the builders about the bricks 'to bear in mind all corners are to be returns, and all moulded bricks for jambs will need to be rights and lefts, as it is essential that the texture shall in all cases be laid correctly weathered. The weathered surface of sills to be burnt, smooth and unglazed. You will note the shape of the plinth brick also will be used in certain portions of the parapets ...' Williams to Dawson & Smith, 30 August 1938 (SLV).

7 Conversation with Williams. See also LRW 'Church Architecture', p 191.

8 Williams to Chairman of the Building Committee, 10 August 1935 (SLV).

9 A cross of raised bricks was also featured in the gable of St Silas', Albert Park. \*\*\*\*\*

21 (g)

The late Professor Joseph Burke,<sup>10</sup> considered St Paul's, Caulfield, to be Williams's best example of the 1930s modern Gothic style and his pinnacle stylistically. Burke remarked that when he first arrived in Australia and was driving along Dandenong Road, he found his attention gripped by the Church. He described the west face 'as an excellent example of how modern techniques can be happily used in a traditional building'.<sup>11</sup>

The chapel was extended in 1961 and the Reverend G Kircher said 'I count myself a most fortunate vicar to have inherited such a glorious church ...', and Dr Barton Babbage, said 'it has the atmosphere of a cathedral'.<sup>12</sup> 21 (d)

Williams considered St Peter's Murrumbena as his specially remembered commission, because it presented probably the greatest challenge of his career. In 1924 only one bay of the nave had been built. This was lofty and 'wedge-shaped, rising like a slice of cheese' for thirty five years, and although he was requested by various incumbents to keep the brick building very high, it was too expensive.<sup>13</sup> He cleverly restructured the built portion at the west end to form a rectangular tower, dropped the nave down to a lower height, and widened the chancel to accommodate the choir stalls. 22 (a)  
22 (b)  
22 (d)  
22 (e)

Williams was responsible for restoring several churches in Melbourne, which had been destroyed by fire,<sup>14</sup> which prompted some banter from family and friends, suggesting he possibly fanned the fires.<sup>15</sup> However, as a very religious man he was mindful of the parishioners' grief, and strove to imbue his churches with an atmosphere of peace and devotion, which he hoped would appease their sense of loss.

St Peter's Peace Memorial Church, Box Hill, was rebuilt to a new design.<sup>16</sup> His familiar preferences are apparent in the open timbered roof, spacious nave, deep chancel and roomy sanctuary, and baptistry at the western end.<sup>17</sup> The 22 (g)  
22 (h)

10 He was for many years head of the Fine Arts Department, Melbourne University. Conversation with Blyth Johnson.

11 Information on LRW files (SLV).

12 Reverend Godfrey Kircher to Williams, 24 May 1961, saying that 'the chapel is by universal consent one hundred per cent satisfying ... Its proportions, acoustics and finesse, impress every one who enters ...' (private papers). Sadly this church has been defaced by a glass door in the sensitively balanced facade and exposes the building to the traffic noise of Dandenong Road. Vodafone cables and equipment are draped over the tower! Williams would never have allowed such desecration of his church.

13 Conversation with Williams. The addition of semi-transepts provided a wide area leading up to the altar, and created a roomy chancel. LRW 'Church Architecture', p 190. He preferred the choir and organ placed behind the congregation, but the vestry wanted them in the chancel.

14 Fire gutted William's own parish church St Andrew's, Brighton in 1961, and was rebuilt to his new design in 1961-2.

15 Conversation with Williams.

16 Completely destroyed in 1949 and rebuilt in 1952-3. It is well situated on the crest of a hill, and facing the main road.

17 Of interest are the gradation of colours in the baptistry windows, shaded from cool greens to deep amber, with variety to the leaded square glazing, which lends itself to this type of window.



vicar warmly expressed his thanks to Williams on behalf of his flock.<sup>18</sup> The reredos consisting of a mural of mosaic tiles was added some time later.<sup>19</sup>

Two Camberwell churches, St Mary's,<sup>20</sup> and St John's,<sup>21</sup> were also burnt down. The only surviving portion of St John's, the tower and spire, were pronounced safe, and incorporated into the design. These familiar segments were linked by cloisters to the new building, which was described as 'squat, massive and permanent as an old Norman Abbey'.<sup>22</sup> It is of steel portal frame construction, with modern trends in church architecture manifested in the lofty and spacious interior of cathedral-like dimensions, with the choir stalls set well back into chancel walls. The sanctuary, with its very wide altar, is divided from the choir by a tall rounded arch, and shaped as a semi-octagon.<sup>23</sup> Slight ambulatory pillars support a ceiling of acoustic metal golden tiles, bordered in blue, with no beams visible.<sup>24</sup> The focal point of the east end is the high altar, with the splendid reredos mural, of 'the Adoration' painted by Len Annois. Williams specified the particular preparations required<sup>25</sup>, before the mural was commenced.<sup>26</sup> The eagle emblem of St John, approximately 900 mm square, was set in the exterior brickwork above the western entrance.

Two modern and very attractive churches, St Mark's, East Brighton and St Paul's, Frankston were designed by Williams and Partners. St Paul's, Frankston, built of brick with a portal frame. has a tower especially designed to catch the light and to read well from a distance.<sup>27</sup> Of interest are the three gables on the north side of the nave enclosed from almost floor to ceiling with superb Napier Waller windows.<sup>28</sup> Archbishop Sir Frank Woods was impressed with the way Williams 'blended the new with the old', and had achieved 'a splendid atmosphere of worship'.<sup>29</sup>

18 Reverend E Eggleston to Williams, 24 June 1953 (SLV). 'After a week of absolute delight ... in the beautiful church you have designed ... I want to give you our warmest thanks ... All Box Hill appears to be enthralled with the result ...'. A black and white perspective drawing was made and postcards duly run off to raise funds.

19 Some parishioners were critical of the mural designed by Anne Graham.

20 St Mary's, South Camberwell, was burnt down in 1955 and rebuilt in 1958.

21 This prominent landmark, was gutted by fire in 1955 and rebuilt in 1956-7.

22 *Church of England Messenger* (20 March 1959). It was built of a pinkish toned brick, modern in colour, harmonising with the existing red brick tower, and internally lined with cream brick. The imposing west wall features a great tall and slender window made by Taylor-Kellock, and a large porch, the latter divided from the nave by a spacious narthex screen of glass. Kellock made 17 stained glass windows for St John's, during 1957-70, Napier Waller's work is also represented.

23 Lighting is achieved by large slender windows in nave and clerestory, heightened by two large rose windows high in the north and south walls of the transepts. Artificial lighting comprises enclosed fluorescent tube fittings placed vertically on the nave pillars and chancel walls, with concealed lighting in the sanctuary.

24 Of interest are the second-storey vestries in the north west corner of the building, and the western gallery, built above the narthex, which has a stepped floor with three tiers, and is entered by a stairway from the narthex.

25 For further information see chapter on 'Murals'.

26 Annois painted a small mural, 'Fishers of Men' over the interior of the west door.

27 Conversation with Williams.

28 Waller's large baptistry windows at the west end enhance the narthex, above which is the organ loft. Christian Waller made a window in 1934 for the east end.

29 Archbishop Sir Frank Woods to Williams, 3 December 1959, (private papers). The Rodda memorial chapel was added by Williams in 1962.

St Silas's, North Balwyn, built of richly coloured textured brick, created considerable interest for its modern design. It is of basilica form, with steel portal frame construction and a campanile, which is triangular in section.<sup>30</sup> On the south side fourteen huge non-pictorial multi-coloured antique glass windows, inspired by designs in Coventry Cathedral, extend almost from floor to ceiling, creating a kaleidoscopic effect.

24(f)

Noteworthy are the four 6.7 metre crosses of polished wood in the nave, which were originally designed as pillars with just one arm to conceal a light, but it was only after the architect added another arm for a more balanced effect that he perceived the importance of the alteration.

24(g)

Williams was mindful of the importance of visual proportion, as seen in the freestanding reredos covering the large expanse of flat wall, finished by an illuminated cross. His contemporary architecture reflects the greater emphasis on the importance of light and cheerfulness required in churches of the 1960s, whilst still maintaining traditional liturgical requirements.<sup>31</sup> In 1964 this building was given the Meritorious Lighting Award for excellence in lighting design in architecture, by the Illuminating Engineering Society of Australia.<sup>32</sup>

24(h)

St Silas's church, comprising 'shapes and sizes of objects which please the eye' generated much interest, and after a visit by Professor Brian Lewis and his students at Melbourne University, an article appeared in the Architecture School's journal *Cross-Section*.<sup>33</sup>

Perhaps the most devastating experience for Williams, as a parishioner of St. Andrew's, Brighton, was the disastrous fire of 1961. After restoration was ruled out, he was commissioned to design a new church. Archbishop Sir Frank Woods, who favoured a contemporary design, suggested 'that it was a marvellous opportunity to build a new church with the liturgical reform ideas incorporated in it ... and that the altar rail should be in the form of a semi-circle round the altar ...'<sup>34</sup> However, after much discussion with the vestry, Archdeacon Codrington believed the people of Brighton would not accept a modern liturgical arrangement, and it was decided to opt for a traditional nave and chancel, marrying in the old and new buildings.<sup>35</sup> Using red autumn-tinted ripple-tex bricks, the new building was joined by means of two cloisters at right angles, with the entrance to the old nave.<sup>36</sup>

27

30 It was mounted by the ship's bell from the former historic St John's church, La Trobe St, Melbourne. Iona stone from Iona Abbey is set in the narthex.

31 Conversation with Blyth Johnson, who was involved with the design of this church

32 Conversation with Secretary, Illuminating Engineering Society. Photo of interior and article in *Illuminating Engineering Society Journal* (December 1964). The unusual fluorescent downward lighting of the tubes in the arms cantilevered out from the portal frames, resulted in a glare free atmosphere, and a vertical component throwing light up to the ceiling. Conversation with Johnson.

33 *Cross-Section*, 146, 1 December 1964.

34 Conversation with Archbishop Sir Frank Woods, also correspondence to the author, 15 May 1990.

35 Conversation with Blyth Johnson.

36 Conversation with Williams; and *Parish Paper of St Andrew's, Brighton* (July 1961).

The rebuilding scheme included retaining four bays of the bluestone nave,<sup>37</sup> now known as the 'Pioneers Chapel',<sup>38</sup> which serves as a minor transept and baptistry, preserving some vestige of the historical and distinctive Brighton landmark.

27

Williams had planned that the whole of the large recessed east end wall should be enriched with a reredos of Venetian vitreous mosaic, 'rising towards its summit in a stirring outburst of joyous, expressive colour'.<sup>39</sup> Because of the cost, this was deferred and finished instead with a large cross. Later it was joined by Guy Boyd's sculpture.<sup>40</sup> Williams thoughtfully used for the side windows in the nave, multi-coloured glass, quiet in tone, that would not compete with the future reredos. Anodised aluminium acoustic tiles were used on the ceiling.<sup>41</sup> Waller and Kellock supplied some of the stained glass windows.<sup>42</sup> A distinctive feature in the gable of the south transept is the richly traceried rose window, with its leaf-like pattern.<sup>43</sup>

28

All the furniture and furnishings were made to the architect's designs.<sup>44</sup> The altar is accented significantly against the massive white background, which is lit by narrow side windows. The wood treatment for the altar, pulpit, lectern and chapel altar was enhanced by the inclusion of decorated 'Polylite' panels.<sup>45</sup>

29

Williams has placed the choir and organ in the western gallery to give an impetus to the singing. There is a secondary organ (an echo organ) bracketed on the wall of the side transept below the big rose window. The commodious

37 Built of bluestone in 1856-7 with seven bays, it comprised the original church designed by Charles Webb and was characteristic of his church designs. Although badly damaged, it was partly incorporated in the present building. The 1886 east end of Oamaru limestone, designed by Lloyd Tayler was too badly damaged by fire and water to include in the new design. However the bluestone portion stands as an essential part of Brighton's history, and is in the forefront of the design of the new church.

38 The builders not only constructed a new building, but restored some of the old beams to their original condition, for re-incorporation in the old structure. Derite made synthetic stone for Webb's original design of eleven windows, and six corbels of the bluestone nave. They worked on the new portion of the church, which included the window over the south entrance, also the cross and base on the south gable.

39 LRW 'Church Architecture', p 194.

40 In 1987, on the 25th anniversary of the new church, Guy Boyd's bronze sculpture, the 'Return of the Prodigal Son', was placed on the wall of the apse under the cross.

41 Conversation with Williams, who said fibrous plaster would have been inappropriate.

42 See 'Stained Glass'.

43 This is similar to the memorial window he designed for the east end of the Geelong Grammar School chapel, and a motif used in other of his churches.

44 Fallshaw & Sons, Heidelberg, made the eighty-eight pews which were 7.92 m and the grooves on the ends were filled with four lines of blue paint work by signwriters Ray Watson and Maurice Miles, who also did the gilding on the grooved portions of mouldings on the sanctuary furniture. The specification stipulated that 'For parts to be gilded, first seal, then size and finish with gold leaf skilfully applied, keep edges of paintwork and gilding to a clean straight line'. Specification for church furniture, 22 August 1962 (private papers).

45 Representations in brass of the four apostles, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are seen on the four blue 'Polylite' panels of the pulpit, executed by Rein Slagmolen of Vetrart Studios. The diocesan coat of arms is on the bishop's chair.

narthex under the gallery with its low ceiling, emphasises the height of the nave and sanctuary, which is obvious as one enters the body of the church and the walls seem to rise in an impressive upsurge - 'an offering of height'.<sup>46</sup> Anodised aluminium acoustic tiles were used on the ceiling.<sup>47</sup>

The design was in the spirit of Gothic, with a flavour of verticality, while modern methods of construction and new types of materials were used effectively. Some indication of the framing is expressed by 'travertine faced piers and horizontal concrete beams'.<sup>48</sup> He usually allowed generous autonomy to other members of his team, and welcomed a fresh approach to a particular design, but was in full control of this project, which he considered his *magnum opus*.<sup>49</sup> Each of the three major architects of St Andrew's church, Webb, Tayler and Williams, were not only residents of Brighton, but also worshipped at this church.<sup>50</sup>

He sometimes worked in conjunction with other architects, as at St Oswald's, Glen Iris, which was completed by Williams and Wyston Widdows. Other contemporaries were Leighton Irwin, Gawler & Drummond, W M Shield, Elizabeth and Winston Stuart Hall, J D Scarborough and Joseph Smith. During the fifties and sixties he formed partnerships with Blyth Johnson, John Paul and Bill Douglas. 22(1)

Not many of Williams's contemporaries specialised in ecclesiastical architecture, for most accepted diverse commissions, which included some churches. It is interesting to refer to some of their churches, though it is

46 LRW 'Church Architecture', p 194.

47 Conversation with Williams, who said fibrous plaster would have been inappropriate.

48 LRW 'Church Architecture' p 195. The vestry thanked him for his work over the years adding that 'his interest in the church since it was built, has meant that we now possess an integrated and harmonious fabric, which must be the envy of many churches'. Philip Burn to Williams on his retirement, 22 April 1976 (private papers); Archbishop Woods said, 'St Andrew's ... is a magnificent church, in any other diocese it might well serve as a cathedral'. Archbishop Sir Frank Woods to author, 15 May 1990.

49 Conversation with Blyth Johnson, who was involved in designing the furniture.

50 R Landells, 'Biography of Louis Williams,' *Architect* (May 1976) p 24.

Williams addressed the matter of acoustics in considerable detail, but it has become apparent that they are poor and could possibly be due to the enormous contrast of the different roof lines between the old bluestone portion of Webb's church and the extraordinary height of the new additions. The problem is not new to this building. The original nave of Charles Webb's church, built in 1855, was considered one of the more perfect examples of a church of the period in the colony. However Lloyd Tayler's extensions of the east end portion built in 1886, comprising the sanctuary and chancel, transept, organ chamber and vestry, were at variance to the low pitch of the roof of Webb's building, having a very high pitched and complicated roof. This destroyed the simplicity of line of the building. Internally, the chancel arch, 'magnificent though it be, caused great acoustic problems as well as interrupting the line of vision'. Weston Bate, *History of Brighton* (Melbourne, 1962), pp 309-11.

It may be tempting to suggest that the present extensions built by Williams may have been designed on the acoustic basis of a greater congregation occupying more space, and thus affecting the reverberation. As the number attending is well below those attending churches in 1962, it is possible that St Andrew's, along with other churches, is experiencing acoustic problems for this reason. See also J E Moore's *Design for Good Acoustics* (London 1961), pp 47, 53-4.

beyond the scope of this thesis to attempt an in-depth study.

Scarborough, Robertson & Love's Littlejohn Chapel, Scotch College, earned a prestigious architectural award. Williams described the Chapel as 'elegant and dignified ... designed in the spirit of Gothic, without any pretence of imitating any historical period'.<sup>51</sup> The design of the chapel is successful, the detailing being exceptionally competent, and compares admirably with Williams's work.<sup>52</sup> The firm's Paton Memorial Uniting Church, Deepdene, and Williams's Thomson Memorial church, Ormond, are both fine designs in the Romanesque style.

Rodney Alsop's St Mark's, Camberwell, is an impressive Gothic building, which dominates the corner of two busy roads. It is his only known church and its interior is decorated with various woodwork, which is very pedestrian and in no way compares with the timber furniture and fitting designs produced by Williams or North for their churches. The altar lacks overall structural form, but is replete with spurious detail, while the choir stalls and pulpit again lack strong structural expression and the detailing is weak and poorly integrated into the design.<sup>53</sup> This church has been badly constructed, the roof leaked, the walls were cracked and the foundations were flooded. The memorial garden had to be dug up to get to the foundations and the ashes stored in the crypt, until they could be returned to the new garden. The church will take ages to dry out and has so far cost a fortune in repairs.<sup>54</sup> To date no such catastrophe has been reported in any of Williams's churches. He was meticulous in structural design and nothing escaped his trained eye in site supervision.

Bates, Smart & McCutcheon's Second Christian Scientist church, Melbourne (in Camberwell), is of architectural importance for its 1938 award of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects' Street Architecture Medal.<sup>55</sup> Bates Peebles & Smart's First Christian Scientist church, Melbourne is in the 'Neo-Grec' style, favoured by this creed for their overseas churches. But Williams chose a different style for the Third Christian Scientist church, Melbourne (in Elsternwick) designing a Romanesque building of pleasing proportions, which compares admirably with those of his contemporaries. The Fourth Christian Scientist church, Melbourne (in Northcote) is unusual, and is a very modern building in a commercial environment.<sup>56</sup>

Mockridge, Stahle and Mitchell's St Faith's, Burwood is striking for its simplicity and stability of form. The circular brick wall buttressed by walls of natural stone, forms an effective anchor to the upthrust of the elegant green copper spire.<sup>57</sup> Williams saw St Faith's as one of the first of the successful

51 Williams cites Scarborough as the designer. LRW 'Church Architecture', p 195.

52 Conversation with J Maidment.

53 Conversation with Maidment.

54 Information from a relative and parishioner whose mother's ashes were buried in the garden. The candidate attended both ceremonies concerning placement of the ashes...

55 Lewis, p 63.

56 Built by Williams & Partners, B Johnson being largely responsible for its design.

57 B Johnson, 'Recent Victorian Churches', *Architecture in Australia* (June 1959), pp 76-80.



churches built in Victoria in the modern spirit, but said 'it should not be taken for granted that all new contemporary styled churches are worthy ... for some are gimmicky and lacking in good design'.<sup>58</sup>

Romberg and Boyd's St George's, East Ivanhoe<sup>59</sup> echoes many features implicit in Williams's churches. There is no east window, but a mural panel, a device used by him on some occasions. The church has a roomy sanctuary, spacious chancel, wide central passageway, side aisles and large narthex. Also the choir is positioned well back on either side, which reduces the distraction that occurs when it is placed directly in front of the congregation. Williams always made the altar the main focus of the sanctuary, avoided clutter in the chancel with choir stalls set well back, even extending the walls outwards to accommodate them, as seen at St Peter's, Murrumbena.

Some later modern buildings built by Williams & Partners included All Saints', East Malvern; additions to St Mary's, East Preston; Church of Emmanuel, South Oakleigh; radical extensions to St Jude's Alphington; Holy Trinity parish hall, Hampton; Holy Trinity, Pascoe Vale; St Aidan's Carrum and St Matthew's, Glenroy. These churches are excellent examples of 'modern' styles and compete favourably with those buildings designed by Williams's contemporaries.

25

26

Williams remarked that he was fortunate to be designing at the height of church building in Australia, as now fewer buildings would be needed because most parishes had their own churches, except in some new suburbs.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>58</sup> LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 196.

<sup>59</sup> Williams prepared plans and specification for enlarging the hall and kindergarten.

<sup>60</sup> Conversation with Williams.

## THE OFFERING OF SPACE



Williams was prominent in the field of ecclesiastical architecture and believed that 'an offering of space'<sup>1</sup> was necessary for dignified ceremonial. He had a great understanding of ecclesiastical things, and claimed that he owed much of his fundamental knowledge on church architecture to Canon Selwyn Hughes, a prominent High churchman, who stressed the importance of functionality in the designing of ecclesiastical furniture and fittings. Williams is still regarded highly for his practicality in liturgical correctness, and his conservation role in retaining historical items.

During Canon Hughes's incumbency at St Peter's, Eastern Hill, Williams and Hughes agreed that the early windows in the nave must be kept in situ. The architect arranged for the re-leading of these early hand made plain glass windows, with their typical Ferguson & Urie coloured borders, and prudently ensured their future. As well, Williams re-used some of the English oak first used in the building of St Peter's, in 1846. This timber had reputedly been salvaged from the *Cataraqui*, the wrecked migrant ship en route to Melbourne.<sup>2</sup> In 1929 the level of the sanctuary was raised and the altar lengthened.

19(e)

19(a)

Williams noted that churches of the 19th century and many built in the early twenties were 'lacking in generous space planning', the sanctuary appearing as a mere excrescence and being cramped and inconvenient, chancels unduly narrow, and choir stalls that created a jumble of timber between the congregation and the sanctuary. But with a purposeful plan and subtlety of

1 Louis R. Williams, 'The Offering of Space', *The Defender*, XII, 4 (December 1932), pp 32-34.

2 The ship floundered off the coast of King Island in 1845, and was one of the worst shipwrecks in Australian history, over 400 lives being lost with only nine survivors. For a full account see Andrew Lemon & Marjorie Morgan, *Poor Souls they Perished', The Cataraqui Australia's Worst Shipwreck*, Melbourne 1986. But Colin Holden in his book, *From Tories at Prayer to Socialists at Mass, A History of St Peter's, Eastern Hill* (Melbourne 1996), p 7, queries this claim. In order to accommodate the heavy seventy ton new organ, choir and orchestra, Williams and engineer Sir Clive Steele were responsible for the erection of the present concrete and steel gallery. It was then re-faced with the English oak which had been carefully stored during building operations, so that the gallery would take on its original appearance.

proportion he believed that in his own designs he was able to achieve a considerable degree of improvement and a sense of space.<sup>3</sup> He maintained that it is aesthetically destructive to have a church cluttered with seats and obtrusive choir stalls.

In his well known parish church of St Andrew's, Brighton, this generous offering of space is manifested throughout the church, together with a profound grasp of mass, proportion and scale. A sense of height is perceived as one steps from the narthex into the lofty nave, and the church walls appear to rise in what seems a majestic upsurge which, brought about by the change of scale, is remarkably effective.<sup>4</sup>

Williams provided an overall design for creating extra space in the interior of St Paul's church, Geelong, and after examining the existing pews found that -

1. The seats are only 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide, whereas, for reasonable support the width should be 15 inches.
2. Though the backs slope, the seats are level This too increases the discomfort.
3. The pews are too close, averaging 2'9" from back to back. This spacing is too limited to encourage kneeling.
4. The design of the pews is irritating and the appearance unsatisfactory.
5. The grouping of the pews is not in accordance with Anglican tradition, as there is no centre passage way.

He said that in his redesign 'the pew ends link up sympathetically with the outline of the choir stalls, while elaboration has been avoided; the swing kneeler is placed 11" [280 mm] away from the edge of the back board, as in such a position it renders kneeling easy, comfortable and free from strain.'<sup>5</sup> He achieved extra space in the body of the church, with reseating arrangements and more elegant pews, as well as providing a centre aisle 1.52 metres wide and aisles approximately 1.02 metres for a dignified ceremonial. He also designed the memorial chairs for the side chapel, and lowered the altar by one step, and designed the narthex.<sup>6</sup> While respecting the character of the church built in 1854, he improved the liturgical requirements of Anglican worship and conceptualised more space.

At St John's church, Cairns, North Queensland, Williams was able to renovate and improve the east end, including the reredos and panelling, which the vicar said 'completely transforms the church from cold white unfinished austerity to the most satisfying friendliness combined with dignity. The joiners have really done a good job and I think you would be pleased with the way in which they have executed your design ... The altar,

19 (b)

3 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 190.

4 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 194.

5 Williams to Dr Griffith, 4 July 1939 Williams insisted the dado be Manchurian oak.

6 Williams's contact with St Paul's began in 1920 in the North & Williams partnership, when the Peace Memorial pulpit was designed to honour the men who fell in the great War (SLV). See also R A Nicholls, *Saint Paul's Church Geelong: Historical Survey 1854-1979* (Geelong 1979), p 24.

although essentially Latin, fits in most pleasingly ... <sup>7</sup>

Williams was able to instigate improvements to Christ Church, Geelong, which had an uncomfortably shallow sanctuary. A wholesale reconstruction of the east end, was undertaken in order to implement the interpretations of the post-war liturgical movement. Relocation of the chapel and choir were made to allow for a freestanding altar on a platform that covered the old chancel. A new pulpit and altar rails were provided and the organ restored and enlarged. This church now possesses a modern roomy sanctuary, that is not only liturgically correct, but harmonises admirably with the traditional English style of the building, originally designed by Edmund Blacket in 1846.<sup>8</sup> 19(c)

Bishop Grant said that Williams was a perfectionist with a good reputation for an excellent finish in his furnishings and used his wide knowledge and experience to good effect. He frequently used the symbolic number of seven - three steps up to the chancel in front of the choir, one to the communion rail and three up to the altar, which was the Anglo-Catholic ideal,<sup>9</sup> however the arrangement of the altar steps were sometimes varied.<sup>10</sup>

Williams urged that generous floor space be provided in the sanctuary, north, south, east and west, in order to house the altar appropriately, and for the dignified performance of the ritual associated with the Eucharist. Some sanctuaries are as shallow, cramped and inconvenient as they are ungraceful; and in some cases two clergymen administering the Holy Communion have difficulty in passing one another.<sup>11</sup> He may have been influenced by Robert Haddon's views in *Australian Architecture*, where he stressed the importance of spaciousness for comfort, access and the 'proper performance of the prescribed ritual'.<sup>12</sup>

Williams pointed out that where the sanctuary is in the form of an apse, the altar looks well if brought forward to a position under what is termed the 'chord of the apse, which is the central member in the roof at which the radial trusses or ribs meet'.<sup>13</sup> This arrangement was made at St Peter's, Eastern Hill,

<sup>7</sup> C H Capp to Williams, 28 November 1949 (SLV).

<sup>8</sup> Conversation with B Johnson (Williams & Partners), who looked after this work. Bishop James Grant, *Christ Church, Geelong 1843-1983* See also LRW collection SLV.

<sup>9</sup> Conversation with Blyth Johnson.

<sup>10</sup> Johnson commented on how particular schools of Anglicanism could influence details of sanctuary layout. A high churchman could ensure that the very top step of the altar went across the front, but not around the sides, to prevent the office of communion from the north end of the step, which in the low church is usually 5 inches [125 mm] lower. While, as Dr C Holden has said, a low church patron (or designer) could create a sanctuary with minimal space, making it difficult to accommodate the larger number of liturgical functionaries used in Anglo-Catholic liturgy. The high church emphasis on the primacy of the Eucharist means that anything that helps to focus the altar is likely to be brought into play; not only raising the altar as far as possible, but creating a framework (reredos, window placement &c).

<sup>11</sup> LRW, 'The Offering of Space', p 33; also conversation with Williams.

<sup>12</sup> R J Haddon, *Australian Architecture*, Melbourne 1908, pp 159-60. A copy of this book was in Williams's private collection.

<sup>13</sup> LRW, 'The Offering of Space', p 33. He redesigned the sanctuary, created extra space and made many improvements to the east end.

where the altar was brought forward, raised and lengthened, and years later the walling of the apse was lined with gold tiling creating a spectacular effect. These tiles were  $3/4$ " square (20mm) Japanese gold mosaic 'Bright Or' tiles.<sup>14</sup>

Of particular interest is the mosaic of the 'Last Supper' on the high altar, which was brought to Melbourne for the 1880 Exhibition, from the atelier of the Venice and Murano Glass Company of Italy, the first appearance of their work in Melbourne. The mosaic was purchased by a group of Handfield's<sup>15</sup> admirers and presented to him as a private gift - he in turn gave it to the parish. The mosaic was subsequently installed in the church as an altarpiece.<sup>16</sup>

Another important factor in Williams's designs was his stipulation that treads of altar steps should be spacious, neither over-wide nor too narrow; the width of a foot pace, for example, is governed by the accommodation for genuflecting. Altar rails should be spaced wide apart, so as to provide a wide central approach to the altar, equal at least to the width of the latter, and for apparent reasons, two steps at the rails are not advisable.

In 1910 the Reverend Percy Dearmer published *Fifty Pictures of Gothic Altars* for the Alcuin Club. The intention of the book was, as his wife stated, 'to bring together a series of mediaeval altars for the benefit of architects and of others concerned in the arrangement and decoration of churches'. In the noteworthy successful *Parsons' Handbook* of 1899, he had advocated greater liturgical correctness, and warned against raising the altar too high.<sup>17</sup> He maintained that the object of his *Handbook* was to help remedy the lamentable confusion, lawlessness and vulgarity which are conspicuous in the Church at this time. The confusion was due 'to the want of liturgical knowledge among the clergy, and of consistent example among those in authority'. He was convinced that the Church of England had its own mind about ritual and ceremonial. 'But whether the ceremonial used is little or much, the services of our Church should at least be conducted on the legitimate lines, if only that they may be freed from what is anomalous,

14 Minutes of the Vestry, St. Peter's, Eastern Hill, 24 February 1969; Williams engaged his friend, architect, George Mitchell, in the capacity of consultant for the interior design and to work for 50 hours at \$10 per hour, 8 April 1969. The quotation by Dulmison for this work was accepted by the vestry, 13 May 1969. Suggestions were put forward that Barnes, Franz Schnelle, who did all the tiling work for the Southern Cross Hotel should be considered.

15 The Reverend Henry Hewett Paulett Handfield was made a deacon and appointed assistant curate of St Peter's, Eastern Hill in 1851, later being licensed and inducted as incumbent of this church in 1854. C Holden, *From Tories at Prayer to Socialists at Mass, St Peter's Eastern Hill, Melbourne 1846-1990*, Melbourne 1996, pp 22-24.

16 The most spectacular example of the firm's work is the reredos of the main altar, St Paul's Anglican cathedral, Melbourne. Mosaics harmonising with the architecture are framed in the finest Devonshire marble and alabaster, surmounted by an ornate Gothic arched canopy, finished with a carved cross. See G M Moore, *op cit*, p 196.

17 P Dearmer, *The Parson's Handbook*, 6th ed. London '1907 [1899]' pp 48, 66-7; Williams possessed a copy of the *Handbook* and while he consistently designed interiors that were liturgically correct, he sometimes encountered some opposition when refurbishing other churches, and tactfully sought to convince those in authority to heed his advice.



irreverent, tawdry or grotesque.'<sup>18</sup>

Holden argues that as Williams put such store on Dearmer this demonstrates that there was a theological basis for his approach to space. Yates likewise in *Buildings, Faith and Worship* also makes it clear that Anglicans of all kinds were more and more inclined to lay greater emphasis on the sanctuary area as the 19th century progressed.<sup>19</sup> While Williams consistently designed interiors that were liturgically correct, he sometimes encountered some opposition when refurbishing other churches, and tactfully sought to convince those in authority to heed his advice.

While discussing improvements at St John's church, Devonport, Tasmania, Williams pointed out to the vicar, that the aim was to open up the central area of the chancel, thus providing a dignified approach to the sanctuary, saying 'as it is at present furnished, the chancel and choir stalls are so overwhelming...(that) they interpose such a clutter of timberwork between the congregation and the sanctuary'. He stressed that a wide open space in the chancel gives a dignified setting and too, is helpful in worship. He indicated that the present clergy stall and prayer desk could be retained, but new and suitable choir stalls would be most desirable, saying 'It would make such a wonderful difference to the appearance of your church if you are able to get rid of the present cluttering up effect of the too many small choir stalls that protrude so far between the centre of the chancel ...'<sup>20</sup>

When designing choir stalls in cathedrals, where much music is sung, Williams proposed that stalls be kept low and the tops flat, so as not to intervene greatly between sanctuary and nave. In parish churches ample areas between the two groups of choir stalls were necessary for a dignified approach to the sanctuary, and it was desirable that choir stalls should not obstruct the congregation's view of the sanctuary. He pointed out that the choir could be situated in the eastern portion of the transepts, thus the crossing or a portion thereof, becomes part of the chancel, or alternately the choir accommodated in a western gallery or on a platform at the rear of the congregation, giving an impetus to the singing. Another solution could be a choir gallery in the vicinity of the chancel or the main choir in a western gallery, with an ancillary choir placed in one row of stalls against the north and south walls of the chancel.

However as the original principal use of transepts was for accommodation of chapels, many congregations were not willing to accept change. Dearmer said 'the chancel should not be crowded with benches and desks, which has a very bad effect, but should be kept open as possible', and proposed that the choir could be accommodated in a gallery with the organ 'which will increase reverence, economise space and improve the quality of the singing ... '<sup>21</sup>

Williams found that some authorities insisted on having the choir in the

18 P Dearmer, *possum*.

19 Dr Holden.

20 Williams to Reverend Clifford Robinson, 22 September 1962 (SLV).

21 P Dearmer, *passim*. Williams favoured this arrangement in his own churches.

chancel, and he set about resolving the problem with a more acceptable solution. He planned for extra space by extending the chancel walls outwards for a few feet and having the choir stalls partially set back into the recessed area, as seen at St Peter's, Murrumbidgee. Thus congregations are not cut off from the sanctuary, the altar is less remote, and the celebrant is clearly visible from the nave. Nevertheless he stressed that in order to delineate the sanctuary, ample space should be established at the east end of the nave in front of steps leading up to a raised chancel.<sup>22</sup> Pugin, who strongly argued for the raised chancel, in order to give greater emphasis to this sanctified area of the church, also advocated spaciousness in the aisles and between the pews.<sup>23</sup> Dearmer likewise advised raising the chancel several steps above the nave.<sup>24</sup>

Williams preferred an east end with no windows,<sup>25</sup> and a spacious sanctuary with a freestanding altar, a roomy chancel, and wide aisles, ample light in the nave, well spaced pews,<sup>26</sup> and a clear view of the altar. He favoured a western choir gallery with a spacious narthex under, which with a low ceiling, accentuated the height of the nave and sanctuary, thus creating 'an offering of height'.<sup>27</sup>

Williams helped to create a stronger sense of definition of space in the interior of some churches with his rather innovative use of internal buttresses, which he first used at St Paul's, Caulfield,<sup>28</sup> and later in several other churches. Space was essential to his concept of ecclesiastical architecture.

Altar rails also play an important part in the service. The kneeling space has to be adequate, and where large numbers of communicants are expected, altar rails need to maximise the space available. At St Peter's, Eastern Hill, where Williams was for many decades church architect,<sup>29</sup> he introduced measures to comply with modern requirements. One improvement involved raising the level of the sanctuary and increasing the length of the altar rails to accommodate twenty four communicants at a time, where nine were previously accommodated, thereby assisting both the celebrant and congregation.<sup>30</sup> The lengthened rails were part of the changes proposed in

22 LRW 'Church Architecture', p 190.

23 A W Pugin, *Present State*, p 12.

24 P Dearmer, p 44.

25 If authorities insisted on an east window, as at St Barnabas's, West Wyalong, he placed it high above the reredos, thus minimising any glare. Of interest is the placing of the choir and sanctuary in a single bay, separated only by four steps in the floor.

26 'The height from floor to top of back of seat should not be more than 2ft 8 in, whilst the spacing from back to back should not be less than 3 ft; this will allow of convenient kneeling. The back should slope slightly, and the seat correspondingly. If the back slopes, never have the seat parallel with the floor, as this tends to create an almost conscious muscular strain to the person sitting'. If kneeling pads are used, avoid baize...'. LRW 'Some phases of Church Architecture in Australia', p 21.

27 LRW, 'Church architecture', p 194. The spacious narthex provided vested clergy sufficient space to assemble with dignity, and protection from bad weather.

28 Discussed in chapter 16.

29 The oldest Anglican city church in Melbourne to survive on its original site, begun in 1848 to the design of Charles Laing. Lewis, p 51.

30 Conversation with Father G Taylor, a former incumbent of St Peter's, Eastern Hill.

1964.<sup>31</sup> The whole of the east end of St Peter's, Eastern Hill, was considerably rearranged to bring it into line with the overall liturgical requirements of the Anglican Church worldwide. In order to more fully use the eastern end, an increase in space was achieved by removing the choir screen in the chancel and bringing the altar rail forward. Alterations also included the transepts and sanctuary.<sup>32</sup> A nave altar was introduced and used for the early masses on Sunday, but removed for later services, carried by the vergers on his back. This process earned the nickname 'cafeteria mass'<sup>33</sup> by those sceptical of change, and was later abandoned. The organ was removed and a new organ installed in the western gallery, which also accommodated the choir, thus further opening up the chancel.

Williams stipulated that much can be done with existing buildings to help create this sense of space, without seriously affecting the general accommodation. This was implemented at St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, when the rood screen, originally placed between the nave and chancel, was taken down and moved to its present position at the narthex end of the nave, to make room for the installation of the nave altar and altar rails. Four pews on each side of the centre aisle were then removed and relocated to provide the space for the construction of the altar between the pulpit and lectern.

19 (f)

19 (g)

19 (h)

19 (i)

The nave altar is part of the overall liturgical change in cathedrals all over the world, where the trend now is for worship and ceremonial to be moved closer to the people instead of being at a daunting distance. The chancel screen is chiefly a relic from ancient times, when some English Cathedrals had a monastery affiliated with them. These screens provided places for the religious fraternity to carry out their daily offices in privacy, separating them from the people. Thus the offering of space not only meets the liturgical requirements of bringing today's clergy and laity closer together, but enables the congregation to fully enjoy the beauty of the entire cathedral. However Percy Dearmer in his *Parson's Handbook* would not have sanctioned the liturgical re-arrangement, maintaining that 'a church is not a theatre, and it is not necessary or even advisable that the action in the chancel should be displayed with great prominence'.<sup>34</sup>

Williams allowed for a dignified approach to the sanctuary, with an imaginative and more functional proportion of open space throughout the church to form a harmonious whole. Space is essential to dignity and if seating accommodation proved inadequate on special occasions, temporary chairs or benches could be provided.<sup>35</sup> He avoided clutter in the church, with wider chancels, well-spaced pews, side aisle access in the nave, wide central passageways, and provision of an extra wide narthex area at the west end, ensuring that a dignified and unimpeded flow of the ceremonial be achieved.

31 Information from Dr Colin Holden, Assistant priest and archivist, St Peter's, E.Hill.

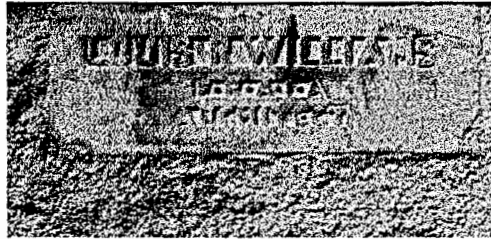
32 Minutes of the Vestry, St Peter's, Eastern Hill, 11 June 1968; 2 July 1968.

33 Dr Holden.

34 Percy Dearmer, *The Parson's Handbook*, London, 6th ed. 1907 [1988] p 48.

35 Conversation with Williams; LRW, 'The Offering of Space', p 34.

## PROPORTION & SCALE



Williams had a great feel for proportion and scale, having been well trained by North, and would agree with Dearmer who maintained that 'dignity is obtained by proportion, and proportion is the most subtle and difficult secret of the architect's craft. The plainest building may be beautiful, if the architect has this sense and knows how to use it; the most elaborate may be (and too often is) ugly, if he has it not.' He deplored unqualified people tampering with the most sacred portion of churches and said 'there are many churches, whose east ends are spoilt, even by apparently so slight a matter as a row of tall candles. There are others, which once had fine and deep chancels, but they are now mean and shallow (for size is purely relative), because a reredos several sizes too large had been put in them and thus ruined the carefully worked out proportions of the architect'.<sup>1</sup> Dearmer also maintained that 'there can be little doubt that the best arrangement for both music and ceremonial in many churches is the old fashioned one of a west gallery, containing both organ and choir'. Williams preferred placing the choir and organ in the west end, but was not always able to convince those in authority.

When making any alterations or additions to existing churches, Williams scrupulously respected the character of the architecture and in no way added or deleted features that would alter the very sensitive subtlety of proportion. This is apparent in the numerous commissions carried out by him at St John's church, Toorak, designed by Wardell in 1858. Williams continued the Gothic characteristics of the bluestone and freestone construction of this fine church, carried out extensive refurbishing of the interior and exterior, while harmonising with the existing fabric of the church, yet not competing with it, or disturbing the carefully worked out proportions of the original designer.

Williams's perception of human scale is particularly evident in his small parish churches of the twenties, where he not only designed buildings to accommodate small congregations, but related them to their environment. This is manifested in St Stephen's, Gardenvale and St Luke's, Brighton, where the churches do not compete with the surrounding buildings, but complement them. There is a pleasant feeling of welcome due to the small

30 (a)

30 (b-c)

<sup>1</sup> Dearmer, *The Parson's Handbook*, London 1907 [1899], p 44.

scale of the porches and doors, compared with the sense of reverence, experienced with the subtle transition of scale as one steps into the body of the church, accentuated by the height of the nave and sanctuary, referred to by Williams as an 'explosion of height'.<sup>2</sup>

St Cuthbert's, East Brunswick<sup>3</sup> is a good example of a well proportioned church, and considered as such by priests who have been closely associated with conducting services there. They expressed the opinion that the church had remarkable proportions, and at no time did one have the sense of a small or cramped building, that the generous areas around the altar and elsewhere provided the right ambience for conducting the rituals, and the acoustics were excellent.<sup>4</sup> Williams used the gable hooded roof to the transepts, a feature seen on some of his other churches.<sup>5</sup>

Licklider, in *Architectural Scale* states that 'a building is in human scale when it is designed so that the human figure and other objects with recognizable size look normal in it and against it,'<sup>6</sup> and claims 'that the dimensions that people actually touch are not only seen, but are also intimately felt'.<sup>7</sup> adding that 'when the observer can assume that sizes are what they appear to be, he is able unquestionably to accept his direct experience of the design; and this has an important effect on the nature of the experience that he can derive from it.'<sup>8</sup> Williams was able to relate to human scale by using familiar objects such as bricks, tiles, steps, seating, even the height of door handles, and thus enable the observer to gauge the size of the building. By designing pews that were comfortable and furnishings and fittings that were in harmony with human requirements, he was able to achieve a genial scale of forms.

Van Pelt in *Essentials of Composition* points out 'that nearly all objects have a distinct relation to our physical wants, and, such a relation existing, must be carefully respected. A step is cut for the practical purpose of making an ascent easy; therefore the proper height of the step is that the average man finds most convenient. Thus a certain unchangeable unit, independent of the scheme of decoration, is established'.<sup>9</sup> Williams was well aware of this requirement, when discussing treads of altars, which should be the width of a foot pace, and of a comfortable height. Human scale was also considered

2 LRW 'Church Architecture', p 194.

3 In 1917 the parish was formed by Archbishop Clarke, with services held in a temporary hall, and it was not until 1931 that sufficient funds enabled St Cuthbert's to be built on its commanding site.

4 Conversation with the Reverend Geoffrey Taylor, who performed services in this church. He was later an incumbent of St. Peter's, Eastern Hill for many years, and knew Williams well. St Cuthbert's has since been sold to the Serbian community.

5 Clinker bricks were used externally and internally and the sturdy tower at the south west corner forms a distinguishing landmark. A Celtic cross imposed externally on the west wall incorporates the rose window. The Gothic styled plan comprises a spacious sanctuary, chancel, nave, organ chamber and porches.

6 Heath Licklider, *Architectural Scale*, London 1965, p 70.

7 Licklider, p 20.

8 Licklider, p 71.

9 J V Van Pelt, *The Essentials of Composition as applied to art*, New York 1930, p 54.

when designing the height of a balustrade or a flight of steps leading into a church.

Williams maintained that the gathering of the congregation in a small area heightened the feeling of togetherness and fellowship, and possibly heeded Ruskin's advice in *Lectures on Architecture & Painting*

that the thing to be required of a building - not observe, the highest thing, but the first thing - is that it shall answer its purposes completely, permanently, and at the smallest expense. If it is a church it should be just large enough for its congregation and of such shape and disposition as shall make them comfortable in it and let them hear well in it.<sup>10</sup>

St Nicholas's, Mordialloc constructed of brick with broad string courses, epitomises a small parish church. The asymmetrical Gothic design with its overhanging eaves gives this tiny picturesque church quite an English rural character. Like Pugin, who believed mediaeval architects 'regulated their plans and designs by localities'.<sup>11</sup> Williams chose a design, which blended successfully with its surroundings. 30 (d)

Another important factor in considering proportion and scale is, as Howard Robertson says in *The Principles of Architectural Composition*, the necessity that the composition should avoid monotony, and that it should have interest. 'Good proportion in each separate element will provide a certain interest in itself, but it is necessary also that the relationship of the elements one to another be made interesting. This interest will be obtained by a judicious introduction of variety or contrast'.<sup>12</sup> Williams proposed the use of contrast, within reason, to get effect, as at St Nicholas's, Mordialloc, where he has successfully introduced variety, contrast and even surprise in his design.<sup>13</sup>

As author of numerous churches, and architect to the diocese of Melbourne for over fifty years, Williams produced spiritual architecture, which 'requires a special kind of sympathy in the architect'.<sup>14</sup> He had this empathy, and together with his deep religiosity, wide experience, judgement and scholarship was able to intuitively create a satisfying composition comprising proportion, scale and space; he could trust his eye and knew when it 'felt right'.<sup>15</sup> This is obvious in the powerful Gothic character of St George's, Parkes, NSW. 30 (e)

Ruskin knew when things looked right to him and in *Modern Painters* said

it is utterly vain to endeavour to reduce this proportion to finite rules, for it is as various as musical melody, and the laws to which it is subject are of the same general

10 John Ruskin, *Lectures on Architecture & Painting*, delivered at Edinburgh in November, 1853.

11 A W Pugin, *Present State*, p 18.

12 Howard Robertson, *The Principles of Architectural Composition*, London 1924, p 26.

13 See 'Arts & Crafts', p 31.

14 B Allsopp, p 46.

15 Conversation with Williams.



kind; so that the determination of right or wrong proportion is as much a matter of feeling and experience as the appreciation of good musical composition.<sup>16</sup>

Williams constantly argued that generous areas of plain walling play an important part, for by contrast, emphasis is given where such is required, to give effect of some window or other architectural feature,<sup>17</sup> as seen in St Andrew's Brighton, St Paul's, Caulfield and St Silas' Albert Park.

30 (f-g)  
21 (b)  
21 (g)

Proportion was important to Williams when he designed the pressed cement canopy to protect Christian Waller's fine mural painting at Christ Church, Geelong, and ensured that it harmonised with the work carried out at the west end of the nave. He was conscious of the architect's responsibility in seeing that the interior furnishings harmonised with the internal finish of the walls, height and structure of the ceiling, style and placement of windows, doors and other openings, and, above all, met the liturgical requirements of each church. He stressed 'that the elements of proportion are of paramount importance and should be forthright and pleasing avoiding unnecessary ornamentation ... (as) no amount of decoration will rescue a badly proportioned building'<sup>18</sup>

30 (h)

Schofield asserts that we are concerned with visual proportion and with the 'relationships of shapes and sizes of objects which please the eye' and suggests that visual proportion should be congenial.<sup>19</sup> Blyth Johnson said that Williams showed a fine sense of space and proportion, and achieved a great deal in bringing the congregation into closer relationship with the sanctuary.<sup>20</sup>

Williams's interpretation of satisfactory proportions was largely governed by his concern for the human factor, namely the size of the average human figure, and the objects which in size are associated with it, and the relationship between religious and symbolic elements, and consideration for the environment. Many of these important features are to be found in the two well-proportioned Camberwell churches of St John's and St Mary, which replaced the former buildings destroyed by fire.

30 (i)

30 (j)

At St Mary's the cloister on the north side connects the church hall and a spacious narthex. Because of the sloping land, large vestries were built underneath the east end, while in the west a large porch, with a glass screen, serves as a 'crying room', catering for even the smallest human factor. A clear view of the altar, was achieved by locating the organ and choir in the north transept and baptistry in the south transept. The ambulatory adds extra dimension to the church, which is bright, spacious and has excellent

30 (k)

16 John Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, II (London 1898), p 66.

17 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 196.

18 LRW 'Church Architecture', p 196.

19 P H Schofield, *The Theory of Proportion in Architecture* (Cambridge 1958), p 3.

20 Conversation with Blyth Johnson.

acoustics.<sup>21</sup>

Williams stressed that elaboration in design is not so essential as a purposeful plan, and true construction, and a design that depends upon the subtlety of proportion for effect is preferable. 'Gothic', he said, 'is sometimes condemned as a costly style, because of elaborate details, such as intricate moulds, tracery &c', but that is not necessarily the truth. Gothic work does not always presuppose ornate details, it can find true expression of itself 'in simple forms, small windows, strong masses, severe, sturdy and plain', and can be brought up to date with modern methods. 'Truth and the subtlety of proportions are its keynotes'.<sup>22</sup>

John Belcher in his *Essentials in Architecture* describes good scale as the 'proper relation of the several parts to one another and to the whole in point of size'.<sup>23</sup> He points out that 'scale and harmony are essential qualities in good architecture. To obtain these the architect avails himself of proportional divisions, which must be in true relation to one another', and argues that 'proportion is entirely a matter of relation. It is not the actual size, but the relative size of the part to another that is of so much importance. It must be understood that the human figure is the standard by which the eye consciously or unconsciously measures everything'.<sup>24</sup>

Williams was constantly aware of relating his design to the human factor in all his churches, large and small, with each piece forming 'an integral part of the scheme of things'.<sup>25</sup> This is evident in his small 'cottage' churches of the twenties, right through to his larger buildings of the fifties and sixties.

21 The Vicar-General, Bishop J D McKie, praised the design saying, 'it is a fine example of Louis Williams's work,' and acknowledged his distinguished service to the Church over many years, saying 'he was incapable of doing a thing badly'. *Church of England Messenger*, (August 15 1958), p 127.

22 Louis Williams, 'The Offering of Space', *The Defender*, X11, 4 (December 1932) p 33.

23 John Belcher, *Essentials in Architecture*, (London 1907), p 67.

24 Belcher, pp 75-76.

25 Louis Williams, 'The offering of space', pp 33-34.

## FURNISHINGS &amp; CRAFTSPEOPLE



Williams always kept well abreast of ecclesiastical furnishings overseas and the changing ideas of liturgy in Australian churches. He was well versed in liturgical principles, having a great empathy for the concept of the symbolic significance of the art and architecture of the church. He enjoyed designing furnishings and, being a perfectionist, he sought out the best craftsmen to work on his buildings. He gathered around him a coterie of tried and trusted craftsmen with whom he worked often and best, and who under his supervision were responsible for woodwork, masonry, plasterwork, modelling, murals, mosaics, stained glass and metalwork. The result was a unity in conception and execution. He understood the essential and intricate requirements of a properly furnished church, and would have agreed with Pugin, who wrote 'of all decoration, that of ecclesiastical buildings is the most difficult; to unite richness with severity, to produce splendour without gaudiness, and to erect a temple somewhat worthy of the holy sacrifice, is a wonderful effort'<sup>1</sup>

The editors of the *Ecclesiologist* believed that the decline in English craftsmanship was due not only to the 'depraved taste' of the eighteenth and the stylistic diversity of the nineteenth century, but also of the separation of craftsmanship from industry, as well as the growing practice of delegating individual parts of the work programme.<sup>2</sup> In the very first issue of the *Ecclesiologist* one reads: 'We must see a kind of Freemasonry revived, before we can recover the amount of skill which distinguished the church builders of former days...'<sup>3</sup> Williams designed the furniture and fittings for his churches, and firmly believed, with the Ecclesiologists, that an architect with overall responsibility for a particular design, should not only be proficient in other branches of the fine arts, but also in the various crafts.

Williams admired and had studied the work of leading nineteenth century architects and their association with craftsmen. Pugin had proved his proficiency by actually teaching the various craftsmen how to make the

- 1 A W Pugin, *The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*, republished from the *London Review* (London 1843), p 41.
- 2 *Ecclesiologist*, X (1850) p 117; XIV (1853) p 423; XVI (1855) p 265.
- 3 *Ecclesiologist*, 1 (2nd ed 1843) p 150.

articles he had designed. Street once decorated the ceiling of a schoolroom at Wantage, with motifs taken from Overbeck. This was by no means a solitary occasion of Street's setting to work to decorate a building with his own hands.<sup>4</sup> Butterfield had shown his love of practical craftsmanship when he tried his hand as a smith.<sup>5</sup> George Gilbert Scott founded a new industrial school with a curriculum particularly structured to meet the needs of craftsmen working on Gothic buildings.<sup>6</sup>

Williams had been particularly influenced by Scott's grandson, Gilbert Scott, especially his Liverpool Cathedral and its furnishings.<sup>7</sup> Allsopp argues that decoration is a significant factor in the design vocabulary of architecture, and the skills acquired by a good craftsman in handling materials are of paramount importance to the designer.<sup>8</sup>

7(e)

While working with North, Williams had gained a good knowledge of the various crafts, especially the cabinetmaker's craft.<sup>9</sup> He was a keen amateur painter with a great love of the fine arts, particularly murals and stained glass, and concerned himself with every detail of church furnishings.<sup>10</sup>

He was a deeply religious man, a devout Anglican,<sup>11</sup> and was totally committed to producing work that was not only pleasing to his mind, but worthy of his religious obligation. He was constantly called upon to design not only the altar and reredos, dorsal and riddel posts, but altar plate and religious objects used in ceremonials. His furnishings exemplified the highest standards of ecclesiastical architecture and were both functional and dignified. He supported Pugin's edict expressed in his *True Principles* - the right use of materials, the endeavour to express the use and purpose of a building in its external features, and Pugin's rule to 'Decorate your construction, not construct your decoration'.<sup>12</sup>

Local craftsman were given the same opportunity to express their vitality and fertility of imagination in furnishing churches as the mediaeval master craftsmen had in the Middle Ages. Working to Williams's designs they carved capitals, ornamented mouldings, carved fonts and pulpits in wood or stone, decorated walls and used coloured glass in their windows, shaped church plate, made rood screens, altar rails, chancel gates and grilles. They worked in every branch of the decorative arts with enthusiasm and skill, as had their predecessors, guided by the architects of the Pugin circle. Williams

4 A E Street, *Memoirs of G E Street, R.A. 1824-1881*, New York '1972 [1888]', p 13.

5 P Thompson, 'William Butterfield' in P Ferriday (ed) *Victorian Architecture*, p 168.

6 G G Scott, *Personal and Professional Recollections*, pp 87, 88, 241, 373.

7 Conversation with Blyth Johnson of L W and Partners.

8 B Allsopp, *A Modern Theory of Architecture* (London 1977), p 85.

9 As already noted, his grandfather manufactured Tasmania's fine pianos and his father owned a large furniture manufacturing business, while his mother was interested in painting and decorating. Conversation with Williams, who said he had learnt a great deal about furniture from his father, who had hoped he would carry on the business.

10 See appendix.

11 See page one of this thesis.

12 A W Pugin, *True Principles* (London 1841), p 1

acquired a thorough knowledge of symbolism relating to church furniture, and realised that his design had to be functional, resulting in a masterly work.

He was an avid reader and regularly visited galleries and artists' exhibitions, as evidenced by his wide collection of books and catalogues about painting and sculpture.<sup>13</sup> It is quite possible that he augmented his knowledge of different craftsmen during commissions carried out in conjunction with other architects in Victoria and interstate.<sup>14</sup> At the Athenaeum Club and Savage Club, where Williams met his colleagues, one can surmise that some discussion centred on current buildings and craftsmen. Williams employed some of the finest artists and artisans of the day.

It is a truism that many people look at the exterior of a church and judge the building by its particular style, its dominant features, such as the tower or graceful spire, polychrome brickwork, outstanding portico, bluestone construction relieved by freestone tracery and sculpted gargoyles, an unusual belfry or arcading. The interior generally attracts admiration for its altar and reredos, stained glass windows, open timbered roof, stonework, mosaics, eagle lectern, carved stone font, encaustic floor tiles and carved wooden fittings. But few, if any, consider the functionality of those fittings and furnishings.<sup>15</sup>

Father Geoffrey Taylor states that the acoustics are often so poor in some churches, that the vicar has to stand relatively still in front of a microphone, restricting any body language, instead of fully concentrating on his sermon and keeping the attention of the congregation.<sup>16</sup> Dr Max O'Connor related that often there was insufficient room to place the coffin between the front pews and the pulpit, and if there was no central aisle, coffins were carried around the pews in a less than dignified manner to reach the west door. Marriages were conducted in extremely cramped conditions, with scarcely enough room for the wedding party to assemble with some sort of dignity.<sup>17</sup>

Bishop Grant told of altar treads where one risks stumbling, notes sliding off desks, poor lighting, and other mishaps, but said that 'in his many years as a

13 The author kept in touch with Williams until his death in 1980, and sees his family.

14 He had an good relationship with Leighton Irwin, who worked on parts of St George's Hospital, Kew. He collaborated with John Scarborough at Firbank CEGGS Brighton, and Gawler & Drummond on the former St James's Buildings, Melbourne, and All Saints' cathedral, Bendigo. Williams co-opted Joseph Smith on the building stage of Wangaratta Cathedral extensions. Elizabeth and Stuart Winston Hall worked as 'architects in association' on projects in the 50s and 60s, including the Children's Home, Brighton, and Retreat House, Cheltenham. Williams and W M Shields made alterations and extensions to Scots church, Melbourne on several occasions. On interstate churches he appointed a supervising architect, such as Robert Blatchford for St Edmund's, Wembley, St Nicholas', Floreat Park, and St Boniface cathedral, Bunbury, W.A.

15 Scant attention is rarely given to the hazards experienced by the celebrant, who is having his eyes 'lashed' by a strong light from long eastern windows above the altar.

16 Conversation with Father G Taylor former incumbent of St Peters, Eastern Hill, who remarked that he considered that 90% of today's churches are liturgically incorrect. This was endorsed by other clergy.

17 Conversation with Dr Max O'Connor, former archivist of the Uniting Church.

churchman, these did not occur in a Louis Williams's church'.<sup>18</sup> Pulpits were provided with a board around the top as a projecting cornice to rest books, notes and a timepiece on.<sup>19</sup> Comfortably designed pews and kneelers were essential, and the shelves provided should be sufficiently deep to take hymn books. Pews must be well spaced for easy access and egress from side aisles.<sup>20</sup>

Williams attended meetings with clients, listened to their instructions, for example, 'the work is to embody the navy and sea', &c. Preliminary requirements were thoroughly discussed, before any final drawings or cartoons were decided upon, and only then would the architect authorise the craftsmen to proceed. He kept a firm hand on the work at all times, was scrupulously fair, and acted in the best interests of both client and craftsmen.<sup>21</sup> He realised, that even though he provided meticulous drawings and detailed instructions to his craftsmen, without their expertise and high degree of commitment, any masterly work would not have been achievable. It is with some of these craftsmen we now concern ourselves.<sup>22</sup>

## Timber

Williams used some of Australia's finest timbers, and convinced his craftsmen to use their own native materials. Local timbers, once regarded as suitable only for flooring boards and tram tracks, were found to possess excellent qualities for carving, because they were moderately hard, of uniform texture and less liable to chip or split than some overseas woods. He used jarrah, which was considered equal to English oak, and helped secure recognition for Australian hardwoods as media for furniture and fittings. He believed in Pugin's practice of 'using materials close to hand', and when in Western Australia chose jarrah for furniture and furnishings, heavy roof beams and skirtings &c, while dressed blackbutt was used for parquet flooring, corridors, and fixed to ceiling timbers to improve acoustics.

Williams gave precise instructions to joiners and furniture manufacturers in the timber preparation for each job, even though they had worked for him for years. 'Manchurian oak had to be fumed to a dark tone and dull polished'; 'Queensland walnut, fumed to an approved dark tone, and dull polished using white shellac'; 'blackwood must be free from all defects ... worked and scraped to a smooth and even finish and well rubbed in with oil to match the architect's sample'; when using black bean 'to finish the work by spraying the whole skilfully with clear lacquer, or to Beeswax finish', leaving the choice to him and samples first submitted for his approval. Oregon beams, were to be 'free from knots, sap, gum veins and all defects' and he advised that 'further seasoning' may be necessary'. Roof principals were to be 'lightly stained with permanganate of potash and then to receive one coat of beeswax well rubbed

18 Conversations with Bishop Grant, former Dean of Melbourne.

19 Incredible as this may seem, these sometimes minor, but very necessary details, are frequently overlooked by those designing church fittings and furnishings.

20 Conversation with Williams.

21 Conversation with Williams. There are more than 100 boxes crammed with sketches, contracts, correspondence, drawings of emblems, and a few photographs, &c (SLV).

22 See appendix for a comprehensive list of Williams's craftsmen.



in', or alternatively were of waxed jarrah. He was cognisant of the problems facing wood carvers, 'rough red cedar introduces another problem as the timber is apt to push off, that is, when coming to the finer parts, the carver has to take much greater care and time in order to prevent this happening. He prefers black bean, as this timber holds together splendidly ...'.<sup>23</sup>

Brian McCarthy<sup>24</sup> worked for Williams for many years, as had his father before him. He recalled that Williams favoured English oak, Manchurian oak, Japanese oak, Tasmanian hardwood, Victorian ash and Tasmanian blackwood, but Queensland maple was rarely used, and fumed hardwood was sometimes substituted for oak.<sup>25</sup> Local jarrah was used in his Western Australian churches. He related some of the preparations. The furniture was rubbed down with white lime to make the grain full before polishing, then fumed with ammonia, the latter insisted on by Williams, as it intensified the colour and enriched the finished product. Wally Langcake and Frank McCave were foremost wood carvers with McCarthy's firm. Langcake carried out some difficult work at St Peter's, Eastern Hill and McCave had forty years' experience with the firm. Although craftsmen were given a relatively free hand, Williams always personally measured and checked the finished work, even though made by accomplished craftsmen.<sup>26</sup>

When Langcake<sup>27</sup> was carving the bishop's throne<sup>28</sup> for St James's cathedral, Townsville, Williams informed the registrar that he 'is thoroughly experienced and ... understands Gothic carving, which few carvers do!, and poor carvers can make a real hash of a work! He recommended him for the blackwood furnishings in St Andrew's, Walkerville, South Australia,<sup>29</sup> and the lectern for All Saints' Nowra, NSW, in Manchurian oak, which was scarce, as there was no available English oak in Melbourne at that time.<sup>30</sup>

Williams instructed the joiners about the war memorial at St Jude's, Brighton, South Australia.<sup>31</sup> Langcake was advised about the stance of the figure of Christ, 'legs are rigidly erect in stance ... the whole figure is absolutely rigid. The idea is taken from the crucifixes of the Primitive Church, which are known as triumph crucifixes ... and brings out the fact that our

23 Williams to C E Smith, Registrar, Townsville, 28 September 1949 (SLV).

24 T McCarthy & Co, church furniture manufacturers.

25 LRW files (SLV). Conversation with Brian McCarthy.

26 Conversation with Brian McCarthy. See chapters, 'memorials', and 'cathedrals'.

27 Langcake's carvings are represented in Williams's churches in the various states.

28 Memorial to Bishop Feetham. Also canons' stalls, screens and other furnishings,

29 Williams to Reverend C F Eggleton, 1 March 1946 (SLV). He advised that Langcake was 'one of the best left that he knew', and had done all the carving on the splendid chancel screen for Geelong Grammar School chapel; also the Bishop Feetham memorial, furniture and furnishings in the Townsville cathedral. See appendix.

30 Williams to Reverend E S Doyle, 18 November 1950 (SLV). Langcake, was employed by T McCarthy & Company, joiners, the only firm in Melbourne at the time with Manchurian oak. He did the carving in Holy Trinity cathedral, Wangaratta, and all the wood carving in St Mark's chapel, the Australian Naval War Memorial, Westernport.

31 Williams to Hadwin & Houghton, 1 June 1948, that 'the blackwood must be free from all defects and to match sample'. T McCarthy & Co. later absorbed this firm (SLV).

Lord's death on the Cross was a glorious victory'.<sup>32</sup> The rector said, 'the workmanship is first rate ... the carver deserves a medal ... this shows that you got the right man.'<sup>33</sup>

When the rood screen in St Paul's cathedral, Melbourne was moved to the narthex, to meet liturgical requirements, Williams considered the project so delicate that 'such a work be carried out with the utmost care and respect for the splendid quality and character of the screen, and, too, for the fabric of the Cathedral'. He advised that it would not be practicable to call for competitive tenders, but that McCarthy be selected, saying that 'at St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne ... this firm carried out some complicated screen work costing \$44,000'.<sup>34</sup> The relocation entailed dismantling the joinery of the screen, member by member, each being carefully labelled to help in identification later, when re-assembling.<sup>35</sup>

19 (g)

McCarthy recalled that when the screen was found to be 1'7" (483mm) too wide for its allotted space in the narthex, Williams solved the problem by placing it slightly off centre on the stone piers, thus enabling it to fit plumb into its present position. Working to his designs, these craftsmen also constructed the new nave altar, and U-shaped altar rails which were wing-nutted on for easy removal for important processions.

19 (i)

McCarthy's work is represented in more than forty of Williams's churches, chapels, and five cathedrals.<sup>36</sup> He regarded him as a man of the highest integrity and tendered consistently for his buildings. He said that 'he treated everyone who worked for him with the greatest respect, and was admired by all trades for his fairness'. He recalled that his biggest disappointment was in not gaining St Andrew's church, Brighton, and even Williams was surprised that his tender was not the lowest. However the craftsmen who won the contract, Fallshaw & Sons did an excellent job.<sup>37</sup>

David Fallshaw<sup>38</sup> said the highlight of his career was the commission at St

- 32 Reverend C Chittleborough to Langcake, 22 August 1948 (SLV). The figure of Christ on the cross, designed by Novice John Ashworth of the Society of the Sacred Mission, who served in the RAAF, was commended by the Curator of the National Gallery, South Australia.
- 33 Chittleborough to Williams, 30 September 1948 (SLV); *Parish News* (September 1948)
- 34 Williams to Dean Thomas, St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, 28 April 1971; 24 July 1971 (SLV).
- 35 Williams to Dean Thomas, 24 July 1971, explaining the procedures, &c (SLV) In order to make good the chancel pavement and stonework, F Hallet & Sons, modellers, smoothed down, stopped dowel holes, repaired and polished affected areas, with close matching ceramic or other mosaic. Picton Hopkins executed synthetic stonework on the bolt holes in the columns to a reasonable match.
- 36 St Boniface, Bunbury, Western Australia; St. Paul's, Melbourne; All Saints', Bathurst, New South Wales, St James's, Townsville, Queensland, and Holy Trinity, Wangaratta.
- 37 Conversations with McCarthy.
- 38 F Fallshaw & Sons, Church Furniture Specialists, West Heidelberg. Fallshaw related that the firm was established in 1872 and is reputedly the oldest furniture manufacturing company in Australia. It is now in the third generation of the Fallshaw family. The firm first made church furniture in 1955 and is specialising in that field, supplying churches of various denominations throughout the state, as well as school and institutional furniture.

Andrew's, Brighton. He took all his craftsmen in cars and showed them the church, saying 'they must give of their best as it was an honour to do this job'. Tasmanian oak was used, and contrary to the common practice in the trade at the time, Williams insisted on his usual treatment of the timber.<sup>39</sup> Fallshaw said 'it was the old fashioned way, but the finish was superb and worth the effort'. He explained that construction of the furniture was of mortice-and-tenon joint pinned with dowels.<sup>40</sup> The wood treatment for the altar, pulpit, lectern and chapel altar was greatly enhanced by the inclusion of decorative 'Polylite' panels executed by the artist Reine Slagmolen of Vetrart Studios.<sup>41</sup>

29

The Diocesan coat of arms was added to the Bishop's chair and the chair platform polished to match the parquet flooring in the sanctuary, with special wheels added for easy movability. Fallshaw proudly stated that he was never once called back to rectify a single fault,<sup>42</sup> and knowing Williams, the 'perfectionist', that was no idle boast. Archdeacon Codrington wrote to Fallshaw on behalf of 'all of us at St Andrew's' expressing congratulations and thanks for the splendid work of skilled craftsmanship and artistry in the new church.<sup>43</sup> This firm supplied furnishings for Williams in St David's Moorabbin, St Peter's, Box Hill, and St Paul's Lutheran Church, Henty, NSW.

29

Fallshaw said 'we remember him as a man who was a great church architect and gentleman, who treated his craftsmen with courtesy and respect, unlike some I could mention! His drawings and specifications for all his projects were meticulous and his designs were an outstanding example of ecclesiastical furniture at its best, and show that he possessed a thorough knowledge of the cabinetmaker's craft'.<sup>44</sup> After discussions with several furniture manufacturers, it appears that Williams's instructions to other joiners in preparing timber for his churches was rather quaint, and not the general practice employed by comparable designers at the time.<sup>45</sup>

N Reding carved the chancel screen at St Luke's, South Melbourne and the

39 The timber was fumed with ammonia in a special fuming room overnight, to an agreed dark tone, coated with a sealer and finished with beeswax rubbed in by hand.

40 Conversation with David Fallshaw. It took three weeks to fit out the church with all the furniture and fittings, which Williams insisted had to be in place by 23 November 1962. The oak pews for the choir loft at the west end were extremely heavy, and required a block and tackle to haul them up. Before being bolted down they were scribed by hand, planing where necessary, to the uneven floor.

41 This firm supplied Polylite for three panels in the high altar, St Boniface cathedral, Bunbury.

42 Conversation with David Fallshaw and inspection of specification and working drawings of furniture and fittings for St Andrew's church, Brighton. Plans numbered 3615A to 3615 (Fallshaw's private collection).

43 Archdeacon G H Codrington, to D Fallshaw, 23 January 1963 (private collection).

44 As already noted, Williams's father and uncle owned one of the largest furniture manufacturing firms in Tasmania. Conversation with D Fallshaw.

45 He was giving similar instructions to Foy & Gibson and Buckley & Nunn's furniture workshops in the 1920s; Hadwin & Houghton in 1939; Thear & Sons in 1941; McCarthy & Company for countless years; and Fallshaw in 1961 onwards.

elaborate screens at All Saints', East St. Kilda.<sup>46</sup> Before he carved the candlesticks in Manchurian oak for St Mark's, Nyngan NSW, Williams instructed Nicoll that, 'as these candlesticks will be going to a very dry part of Australia, it is essential that the timber should be thoroughly seasoned.'<sup>47</sup> Reding's other carvings are at All Souls', Sandringham,<sup>48</sup> the Warriors' Chapel and east end of All Saints' cathedral, Bathurst,<sup>49</sup> and elsewhere.

Robert Prenzel<sup>50</sup> has been referred to as the 'Michelangelo' of gumnut nouveau. His acute eye and accurate detail enabled experts to identify species of flowers, plants and animals from his decorative carvings.<sup>51</sup> He worked on Trinity College Chapel, carving the bench ends and canopy frieze of the stalls using Tasmanian oak, depicting exquisite flora and fauna. The superb Gothic character of his work is seen in the sanctuary of St John's, Toorak, where Williams was for many years church architect.<sup>52</sup> He carved the font cover in St John's, Merbein, one of Williams's early churches.<sup>53</sup> Prenzel also carved the fine Gothic double sided lectern in St Peter's church, East Melbourne.

1 (b)

32

31 (a-b)

31 (c)

31 (d)

Williams, who was familiar with the beauty and excellence of Australian grown timbers, not only used them, but constantly incorporated the native flora and fauna into many of his designs. Prenzel owned a copy of H H Maiden's *The Forest Flora of New South Wales*, that gives a good description of Queensland black bean, which 'strongly resembles walnut ... black bean is easier to dress than even cedar; in fact it is almost perfection as regards the ease with which a surface can be got on it ... (and) it polishes readily ...'<sup>54</sup> This wood is now one of Australia's most expensive timbers, and Williams selected it as the best wood for furnishing some of his most prestigious buildings.<sup>55</sup> He engaged Prenzel for a diversity of commissions,<sup>56</sup> at the same

46 Williams to Foy & Gibson, 9 July 1920 (SLV) This firm executed the joinery for both commissions, receiving strict instructions from Williams relating to the preparation of the Manchurian oak (Although chiefly trading as clothing retailers &c., the firm also had large joinery workshops making furniture to order and architects' designs).

47 Williams to C Nicoll, furniture manufacturer, Melbourne, 24 July 1926 (SLV).

48 Williams to Reding, West Melbourne, 19 August 1929. (SLV).

49 Reding carved the altar rail, candle standards and other furniture in All Saints' cathedral. to Williams's designs (SLV). See appendix.

50 Prenzel was born at Kittlitztreben, Prussia, in 1868, and after receiving a thorough training overseas arrived in Melbourne in 1888, Conversations and interviews with his grandson, Frank Adams, who lived with Prenzel for 17 years. See appendix. see also T Lane, *Robert Prenzel 1866-1941: His Life and Work*, Melbourne, 1994. For more information on his church commissions, See G M Moore, pp 120-7.

51 Age, 8 May 1982, p 2.

52 LRW files (SLV). Plate 32 contains drawings of some of the furnishings Prenzel made for the sanctuary of St John's Toorak.

53 Conversation with Frank Adams.

54 J H Maiden, *The Forest Flora of New South Wales* (Government Printer), Sydney 1904. pt VIII, 24, p 150.

55 Black bean was used for St Mark's chapel, the Australian Naval War Memorial, Westernport.

56 Prenzel also did the honour rolls for St James's Old Cathedral, Melbourne, the fine Gothic reading desk in St Peter's church, East Melbourne, and carved the reredos, panelling, hymn boards, chancel tablets and other furnishings in the sanctuary of St John's church, Toorak. He carved the chancel screen at St Paul's Cathedral, which was moved in 1971 by Williams to enclose the narthex.

time as he was being employed by leading architects of the day, on major secular and ecclesiastical commissions for various denominations.

Ernie Lenegan, who was on the staff of Picton Hopkins, had been thoroughly trained in England, was well versed in heraldry, and was an expert on coats of arms. Williams recommended Lenegan<sup>57</sup> for his carvings at St David's Cathedral Hobart.<sup>58</sup> He carved the new wooden pews at St John's, Toorak, to Williams's designs, using motifs of Australian animals and plants. The enormous pew heads were carved with exquisite flora and the arms with fauna, each pew bearing its particular theme at either end.<sup>59</sup> The front pews of each block bear emblems of St John. Williams ensured that greater comfort was achieved by designing wider seats, lowered a little, with both seat and back gently slanted backwards. Lenegan carved the oak screens<sup>60</sup> filling the arches between the chapel and nave, the carved font cover and dado in the baptistry, and the furniture and furnishings in the Angel Chapel, and elsewhere.<sup>61</sup>

When Lenegan was carving the memorial cross and candlesticks for St Luke's Gulgong, Williams said 'candlesticks made entirely in timber for the altar, as in England, are highly thought of'.<sup>62</sup> The vicar agreed, saying '... they are very beautiful and your design has been splendidly carried out ... The carving of the inscription is an especially fine touch!'<sup>63</sup> In 1946 Lenegan informed Williams that he was working on five of his churches at the same time.<sup>64</sup>

### Stone and plaster modelling

Derite Pty Ltd, Port Melbourne, were experts in creating stone, especially in ecclesiastical work. In St Andrew's Brighton the firm supplied synthetic stone for restoration work to Webb's original design of eleven windows, and six corbels of the old bluestone nave, now the 'Pioneers Chapel'.<sup>65</sup> Derite worked on the new portion, including the window [10.4 m x 2.7 m] over the south entrance made in sixty-seven pieces, and the rose window [3.7 m] diameter in fifty-two pieces, also the cross and base on the south gable. Working to Williams's drawings, the method was to make up a full size model in plaster.

57 Who at that stage had been working for Williams for more than fifteen years (SLV).

58 These included canons' stalls as a memorial to the late Bishop Hay, a canopy to the bishop's throne and parclose screen, a low reredos to the chapel altar, and other furnishings all in Manchurian oak.

59 A beautifully carved pew end was given to the architect as a memento. Conversation with Brian Williams.

60 They contain twelve panels carved to illustrate scenes from Australian life, surmounted by the emblems and names of the twelve tribes of Israel. Williams stipulated that the colour and grain of the timber to be used had to be well seasoned oak, that was further aged by ammonia fuming. Sections of the screens were glazed by E L Yencken, who executed countless glazing commissions for Williams.

61 Williams, who designed all the furnishings and furniture, worked closely with the Reverend Dr A Law, vicar, concerning the motifs and themes to be portrayed (SLV).

62 Williams to Lenegan, 9 March 1945 (SLV).

63 Reverend Howard Ellis to Williams, 4 April 1945 (SLV).

64 Lenegan to Williams, 13 September 1946 (SLV). See appendix.

65 Now known as the 'Pioneers' Chapel'.

This was then cut into sections, and the moulds made from them carefully filled with a rather dry sand and cement mixture, which after smoothing out were water-cured.<sup>66</sup>

Jack Mortley, of Picton Hopkins, worked for over fifty years with this firm, which employed modellers and carvers, who executed major commissions for Williams, making special items for his churches, and working in conjunction with other trades, doing trims, panels over doors, window architraves, &c.<sup>67</sup> The firm made plaster and moulded capitals, baffles and vents, decorative plaster mouldings for interiors and exteriors, cornices, corbels, tracery for windows, canopies,<sup>68</sup> architraves, centre panels, crosses, finials, and Gothic and Georgian ornaments for inside and outside.

Talented wood carvers, especially Ernie Lenegan, were on the staff, while other craftsmen were engaged in mosaic work. Mortley said how much he admired Williams, 'who was a very knowledgeable man, who was able to adapt to the wishes of his client and design according to time and requirements; whether it be for new work, restorations or alterations, and he always provided the craftsmen with comprehensive detailed drawings.'<sup>69</sup> The firm also implemented many important secular projects in Melbourne.<sup>70</sup>

J Swain & Sons, supplied stonework, for marble flooring in the sanctuary and pulpits, altar steps, marble stalls and other areas of the church.<sup>71</sup> The firm also made tracery for windows, as seen in the new windows, one each side of the apse walls above the porches in Toorak Presbyterian Church.<sup>72</sup> There were numerous other occasions where Williams called upon the skills of this firm to execute commissions, similar to those done for him by Picton Hopkins.

The Modern Art Company, Clifton Hill, provided gable crosses, corbels, pressed cement for windows, and grilles &c. for the Naval Chapel. Williams requested the company to 'allow for first class and skilfully executed work. The colour of the work to be buff, somewhat like Sydney sandstone ...'<sup>73</sup>

Lodge Brothers, top practitioners in their field, frequently supplied Williams with foundation stones, altar steps, marble flooring, pulpit steps, and stone

66 The firm based in Port Melbourne, made the pressed cement gable cross and base for St Paul's Frankston, and pressed cement windows for St Peter's, Murrumbeena (SLV).

67 Conversation with Jack Mortley and Mrs Picton Hopkins. The firm was based in Preston, See 'cathedrals' for work on Holy Trinity cathedral, Wangaratta.

68 Conversation with Jack Mortley. The firm made the pressed cement canopy to protect the mural painting, by Christian Waller for Christ Church, Geelong, to ensure that it harmonised with other work carried out by the architect at the west end of the nave.

69 Conversations with Jack Mortley, who knew Williams well, and produced work for him during his 50 years at Picton Hopkins (formerly of Richmond) see appendix.

70 Some of the secular projects with which Picton Hopkins's firm was involved were at Wilson Hall, Melbourne University, new and old buildings, and the Engineering and Architecture Schools, Melbourne University (see appendix). Conversations with Jack Mortley and Mrs Picton Hopkins.

71 See 'Memorials' for other commissions.

72 In 1943-44 Williams was engaged in alterations and renovations at this church.

73 Williams to Modern Art Company, 26 April 1951; 2 and 11 May 1951. This firm worked for Williams over many years, especially on his Presbyterian churches.



for fonts, in particular for the Australian Naval War Memorial, Flinders.<sup>74</sup> They presented various stones to Ola Cohn for consideration, among these, Maroubra stone<sup>75</sup> which, although somewhat hard, was a pleasing colour.<sup>76</sup>

Ola Cohn, an accomplished sculptress,<sup>77</sup> executed many commissions for Williams, including the font at St Alban the Martyr, Griffith, NSW. She exhibited plaster and terra cotta works, sculptures in wood, and some bronze work<sup>78</sup> in the *Exhibition of Ecclesiastical Art*, St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne. As Cathedral architect, and a member of the twelve man Art & Music Committee, he was well placed to scrutinise the work of contemporary artists.

It appears that some of Williams's preferred materials included a white stone from the Ross quarries, Tasmania, which he used for the memorial shrine at All Saints', East St. Kilda. He chose white stone for the memorial reredos at Holy Trinity, Hobart <sup>79</sup> to surround the three *opus sectile* panels, with fine perpendicular cresting on the sides, culminating in the centre with two stone angels. He used whitish coloured Stawell stone, for the new Angel Chapel, St John's, Toorak, and Hawkesbury freestone for the cloister connecting the chancel and vestries. He selected a whitish Sydney stone, for the font at St Peter's Box Hill, where Cohn did a sculptured stone panel depicting 'The Age of Innocence' on the face of the font in low relief.<sup>80</sup> He considered Wakerie stone quarried in South Australia, as 'a pleasing soft stone, off white, not so hard a stone as Maroubra'.<sup>81</sup> He was very impressed with Cohn's excellent sculpture carved in Wakerie stone, of the Pioneer figure, sculpted for the Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden in Adelaide in 1940-41.

Ola Cohn was invited to submit a design for the font for the Naval chapel, Westernport,<sup>82</sup> using Wakerie stone. Her design<sup>83</sup> represented a sea-shell supported on dolphins. 36 (a-c)

Williams recounted that

as regards the colour, Miss Cohn thought white might be disturbing in the chapel, but I pointed out that the font would not be like a memorial tablet on the wall. Tablets on the wall should not be obtrusive, but of a tone to blend in with the colour scheme and not strike a staccato note of disturbance. The font on the other hand is a principal object and in this case, is, in addition, being received in a special baptistry compartment, and

74 Now known as Westernport.

75 This stone, from New South Wales, was used by Hammond (sculptor for the lions at the salient angles of the South African memorial opposite the Shrine).

76 Williams pointed out to the Committee that Lodge Brothers were the builders of the Shrine of Remembrance, and the spires at St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne (SLV).

77 See appendix.

78 G G Ewing, *Exhibition of Ecclesiastical Art, Exhibition catalogue, St Paul's Cathedral 1847-1947, Melbourne 1947*. See appendix.

79 *Church Standard* (22 November 1929). This memorial was to honour Canon Shoobridge, superintendent of the Sunday school, which Williams had once attended.

80 Williams to Cohn, 23 February 1953, The size of the bas-relief was 64 x 292 mm. Swain made the font to Williams's instructions (SLV).

81 Williams to Captain Buchanan, 15 May 1952 (SLV).

82 Meeting of the FND Memorial chapel committee, 18 July 1951 (SLV).

83 Originally known as Flinders Naval Depot. Discussions with Captain Fawell.

that therefore the accent on the font seems desirable or not unreasonable. She seemed to fully appreciate this point.<sup>84</sup>

He stressed that the stone should be of even tone, reasonably hard and of somewhat fine grain.<sup>85</sup> She approved of the sample submitted,<sup>86</sup> and later sought his advice when she was ill.<sup>87</sup> She supplied a model for the dolphins that support the communion rails,<sup>88</sup> which were carved in specially selected black bean. Ola Cohn won many awards, and particularly the Crouch prize in 1952, the first time it had been given for sculpture. In 1964 she was awarded the OBE for 'services rendered in the service of art, especially sculpture'.<sup>89</sup> 36 (d)

### Metalworkers

John R Tranthim-Fryer was born in Hobart in 1858 and studied art at Sydney Technical College. He was a student of Lucien Henry, learnt marble carving at Farmer & Brindley's, London,<sup>90</sup> and attended the Lambeth School of Art, and the Royal Academy. He was director of Swinburne Technical College from 1908 to 1928.<sup>91</sup> When submitting sketches of the eagle lectern and four evangelists to Williams for Trinity College Chapel,<sup>92</sup> he said 'I am delighted to hear of your commission, which I am sure will add to the reputation you have gained as one of Australia's leading Gothic architects ... It is very interesting work, particularly as it is so far removed from the dreadful eagles, which support so many reading desks in our churches today'.<sup>93</sup> He was a leading member in Arts & Crafts circles, and as early as 1902, recommended that good examples of English artistic ironwork be purchased overseas, in order to elevate the quality of local work.<sup>94</sup>

84 Williams to Buchanan (FND), 28 May 1952 (SLV). Carrara marble had been considered, but it was not only too expensive, but unduly hard to work.

85 The Committee accepted Wakerie stone. C Bridge to Williams, 15 August 1952.

86 Williams instructed Lodge Brothers. to supply the block of Wakerie stone, measuring 1170 x 610 x 610 mm delivered to Cohn's studio. He instructed the stonemasons to cut the skirting around the base of the stone before delivery, which involved 'cutting a riser (skirting) about 4 3/4" (120 mm) high to the semi-octagon shape of the base, worked to an even shape to suit the font design, with the bottom of stone squared off smooth'. Both the Committee and Williams approved Cohn's sculpted model scheduled to take 12 months. Reverend H E Fawell to Williams, 8 August 1952 (SLV).

87 A stonemason engaged for some of the rough work had carved too much away. However, it was expertly built up in places and the carving as a whole looked very well. Cohn to Williams, 17 September 1953 (SLV). Williams to Chaplain Fawell, 9 February 1954. 'the position for the font's reception in the baptistry apse is fixed by the prepared pier that rises up to the floor level' (SLV).

88 Minutes of the (FND) Memorial Chapel Committee, 19 February 1952 (SLV).

89 Scarlet, p 114.

90 This leading firm of stone carvers made altars, statues, carved capitals, &c for architects in England and overseas. See G M Moore, op cit pp 173-178.

91 Ken Scarlet, pp 649-651 (see appendix).

92 Williams to Tranthim-Fryer, 27 June 1919 (SLV).

93 Tranthim-Fryer to Williams, 27 March 1920 (SLV) The lectern was finally made of timber featuring an eagle, carved from a model made by Tranthim-Fryer.

94 J R Tranthim-Fryer, 'Art Metal Work' *Building, Engineering and Mining Journal*, 5 (July 1902), pp 206-7. (see appendix).

He designed the copper memorial plaque to Reverend Torrance in Trinity College chapel, and worked on the pulpit, lectern and reredos at All Saints' church, Newtown. One of his most poignant works is the bronze panelling, depicting a dying digger handing a banner to Victory, on the free standing War Memorial at St John's church, Toorak.<sup>95</sup> 1(c) 39

William Mark, an Australian metalsmith working in the style of the Arts and Crafts movement, was considered by many as its most accomplished exponent of this craft in Australia.<sup>96</sup> Williams was important as a designer of ecclesiastical artefacts and had a close association with Mark, who made the exquisite processional cross to Williams's design for St Paul's cathedral, Melbourne. 37(a-b)

Each of the upper arms of the cross terminates in a fleur-de-lis. The surface is applied with geometric motifs connecting the circular enamels. The central enamel depicts an Agnus Dei set within a circular silver frame embossed with radiating lines. Each of the other four enamels depicts a symbol of an Evangelist. There are four cast stylized fruiting vine inserts at the juncture of the arms. The crossed swords of St Paul, in gold, are applied to the base of the cross. On the reverse, at the juncture of the arms, is a circular enamel depicting a pelican in its piety. The cross rests on a tapering cylindrical knob, below which is an octagonal knob with two horizontal arms, set with a cabochon moonstone. The staff is in wood with a silver tip.<sup>97</sup>

This splendid example of his craftsmanship is the cover piece for the exhibition catalogue *Treasures from Australian Churches*.<sup>98</sup> Mark worked for other architects and is represented in churches all over Australia. When preparing a report on restoration work for the Goulburn Cathedral, Williams recommended 'Mark of Gardenvale' as a highly skilled artist to make the vergers' mace for the cathedral.<sup>99</sup>

C R Caslake, craft metalworker,<sup>100</sup> worked for Williams during many decades. He made wrought iron grilles to protect shrines, chapel screens and gates, organ screens, altar rails and gates, hand rails, metal sconces for candlesticks, crosses on spires, balustrades to pulpits, outside steps, lych gates &c. When making the wrought iron handrail for the staircase balustrade at 'Highways',<sup>101</sup> Williams said, 'please instruct your craftsman to observe

95 LRW files (SLV) See chapter 'Memorials'. This freestanding monument, which commemorates the parishioners killed during the 1914/1918 war was designed by Williams, and not as C Miley says in her thesis, p 177, by William Wardell, who died in 1899. Wardell drew the plans for St John's church, Toorak, begun in 1860.

96 J O'Callaghan, *Treasures from Australian Churches*, National Gallery of Victoria, Exhibition Catalogue, 1985, p 16 (see appendix).

97 J O'Callaghan, p 49.

98 J O'Callaghan (cover piece of above catalogue).

99 Williams to R T Wyatt, Diocesan Registrar, Goulburn, New South Wales (SLV). Mark made the metal sconces for two wooden candlesticks, designed by Williams for St Peter's Eastern Hill. Williams to W Mark 2 May 1946 (SLV). see appendix.

100 C R Caslake's firm, South Yarra, was awarded a silver medal in the Franco-British Exhibition, London, 1906 (Noted on the firm's letterhead).

101 Private residence at Sassafras.

perfect accuracy in the execution of the work, in order to obtain sweet and even flowing lines, accurately set.<sup>102</sup> Williams told the Firbank headmistress that 'there is no better craftsman in wrought iron than ... Caslake', who made wrought iron gates for the main entrance, as well as the School Crest to go on them.<sup>103</sup> Williams's contemporaries also employed him for their wrought iron work in Victoria and interstate.<sup>104</sup>

2 (a)

2 (b)

## Tilers

The Australian Tesselated Tile Company was founded in 1885 and specialised in tiles of all descriptions for secular and ecclesiastical projects. When North & Williams were ordering dripstone terminations for Trinity College chapel, Parkville, the firm recommended that they be in moulded terra cotta instead of stone.<sup>105</sup>

36 (e)

The firm supplied a terra cotta cross and base for the Synod Hall at All Saints' Cathedral Bathurst, to Williams's design.<sup>106</sup> Tesselated<sup>107</sup> produced tiles of all descriptions, from decorative to the more functional. Williams selected their tiles for the operating rooms and doctors' scrub rooms at St George's Maternity Hospital, Kew, and Moravian tiles for the tower room at the Naval Chapel, Flinders (Westernport).<sup>108</sup> Williams's contemporaries also employed Tesselated, notably, A A Fritsch, who designed many Catholic churches, chapels, children's homes, boys' colleges, and convents in Ballarat and Melbourne.<sup>109</sup>

Tesselated tiles matched the world's best and competed admirably with the

102 Williams to Caslake, 24 August 1934. He also made the security door for 'Highways'.

103 Williams to M M Cameron, 27 November 1945 (SLV).

104 Caslake is known to have made the main gates for the Methodist Ladies College, Hawthorn, and many of the wrought iron screens, security doors &c. in Ivanhoe. He made a balustrade and security door for the author, and numerous double gates to schools and mansions in Toorak and elsewhere. Conversation with one of the Caslake sons, years ago. His expertise was self-evident in the elaborately worked stainless steel walking stick he made with an animal head as a handle, the entire work was executed in stainless steel! See appendix.

105 Australian Tesselated Tile, Co. Pty.Ltd. to North & Williams, 8 November 1913; 27 November 1913 (N & W collection SLV).

106 Williams to Australian Tesselated Tile Co, Mitcham, 20 September 1923; A Wyatt. to Williams, 21 September 1923 (SLV).

107 The Australian Tesselated Tile Company was formed in 1885 by E E Walker. See appendix. I am extremely grateful to Geoff Walker for access to E E Walker's private papers, Letter books, Minute books, photographs, trade journals, books, catalogues, and numerous other items. See G M Moore, op cit, pp 206-213. (see appendix).

108 LRW files; Williams to A L Ackland, builder, 23 December 1953 (SLV).

109 This firm produced geometrical and encaustic flooring tiles; ceramic mosaic pavements; glazed and coloured enamel wall and hearth tiles; faience; terra cotta work; roofing tiles; ridging, finials and terra cotta roof ornaments, architectural decoration and crosses; majolica tiles; decorated tiles &c. Tesselated wares were used in almost every type of building from churches to hospitals, schools, chapels, hotels, cafeterias, town halls, theatres &c. G M Moore, op cit.

famous overseas firms of Maws and Mintons. As the local trade had preference over imported goods, most government buildings were tiled by Tesselated and it enjoyed a virtual monopoly both in Victoria and New South Wales for many years.

Over the past twenty years, architectural furnishing styles in Australian churches have changed, due in part to the influence of overseas architects, an increasing appreciation of the Australian environment, the cost of new buildings, and changing ideas about clergy-laity relationships.<sup>110</sup> Williams kept pace with changes of fashions in church furnishings and decorations, while ensuring that the standard of workmanship and the dedication of the his craftsmen remained constantly high.

---

<sup>110</sup> Church Scene, (March 1980) p 12.

## MEMORIALS &amp; MONUMENTS



Williams was responsible for numerous memorials throughout Australia. These ranged from chancel screens, altar rails, canopies and reredoses, choir stalls, pews, shrines, carved bronze and wooden plaques on walls, tablets inserted into furniture, font covers, honour boards, narthex screens, stained glass windows, mural paintings and opus sectile panels, to lych gates and freestanding monuments and towers. War memorial monuments and buildings were in demand. New churches were built to commemorate the fallen, while others were extended for the same reason.

While stained glass windows were frequently preferred by donors as memorials, chancel screens could be more eye-catching. Chancel screens were primarily created to form an articulated division between the chancel and the rest of the church, and in some cases they tended to block the worshipper's view of the sanctuary, but Williams wished to avoid any idea of segregation and made his screens quite 'transparent'. The memorial screen at St Luke's, South Melbourne, carved with his characteristic gum leaf motif, allows a view into the chancel, while leading the eye upwards to the foliated and enriched cross surmounting the screen.<sup>1</sup>

The Gothic war memorial shrine at All Saints', East St. Kilda, was carved of white stone from the Ross quarries, Tasmania, and is decorated with ornamented arches, crockets and pinnacles, surmounted by a cross. At the apex of the arches hangs a hand wrought brass lamp emanating a perpetual warm red glow over the shrine, while carved guardian angels stand at each corner.<sup>2</sup> The timber screens involve the shrine, the baptistry, and the central narthex screen. The restrained design in the figured timber of the dado highlights the exquisite carving in the canopy overhead. The cresting, frieze, splendid bosses, and the gum-leaf motif in the foliage and tracery above, exhibits great delicacy and refinement, while the foliated cross crowning the entrance to the passageway is distinctive.<sup>3</sup> This fine work, is an outstanding

38 (a)

38 (b)

1 It was erected to honour parishioners who served in World War I. Williams to Reding, 9 July 1920 (SLV). Conversation with Williams. The screen is of Tasmanian oak.  
 2 On the base four marble shields contain the names of parishioners killed in the war.  
 3 Williams to Reding, 7 January 1921 (SLV).



example of the architect's modern Gothic ecclesiastical furnishings.<sup>4</sup>

Williams, as an old boy of Holy Trinity, Hobart, was honoured when commissioned to design the memorial reredos to his old friend Canon Shoobridge, superintendent of the Sunday school, which he had attended.<sup>5</sup> All three panels are in mosaic opus sectile work, surrounded by white stone work, with fine perpendicular cresting on the sides, culminating in the centre with two stone angels.<sup>6</sup>

38(e)

Williams was church architect for many years at St John's Toorak.<sup>7</sup> The splendid freestanding monument situated near the north-west corner of the church continues the Gothic characteristics and bluestone and freestone construction. The stone cresting on the monument is a good example of Williams's own stylized treatment of the gum leaf. Some leaves have been positioned forward, others backward, creating an interesting pattern of light and shade, and these leaves have a characteristic marginal vein around the edges. Tranthim-Fryer executed the bronze panelling featuring the poignant figure of a dying digger handing a banner to Victory.<sup>8</sup> The octagonal plan of the memorial appears as a two way cross when viewed from both directions.<sup>9</sup>

39

The War Memorial hall was constructed of dark brown manganese brick, and harmonises well with the bluestone church. This multi-purpose building with its main hall accommodating bible classes, meetings, concerts, and social activities, has been described as the 'living room of the church'.<sup>10</sup> Folding doors, allow diverse activities to operate simultaneously.<sup>11</sup>

39

Opus sectile memorials were introduced into St John's, to overcome the shortage of suitable areas for memorials, as all the windows were filled with stained glass. It was decided that as the spaces between the windows in the nave were quite large, they would be ideal for mosaic work. A series of panels was planned so that all donations could be accommodated. Each memorial has a central panel and two ancillary panels, all enclosed in stone tracery. The

40

4 Reding carved the screen and Buckley & Nunn (generally known as retailers, but with a vast workshop of joiners), executed the woodwork to Williams's designs.

5 In the central panel of the reredos the Christ Child is depicted radiant with glory, while the Virgin Mary and Joseph on either side, look up in attitudes of devotion. In the side panels adoring angels hold scrolls reading 'A little Child shall lead them' and they shall call Him Jesus, *Church Standard* (22 November 1929).

6 Holding in one hand a crown above the Child's head, and with the other a lily and palms respectively, emblems of purity and victory. Kerr-Morgan of Brooks Robinson executed the mosaic, and the Modern Art Company, Melbourne executed the stonework.

7 Designed in 1860 by William Wardell.

8 The monument was erected to honour the 36 parishioners who were killed during the 1914/1918 war. Their names are recorded on the other bronze panel, alongside those of 120 nurses and men who served and returned.

9 LRW tapes (private collection). The engraving in stone above the bronze panels is the refrain from Kipling's *Recessional*: 'Lord God of Hosts be with us yet, Lest we forget'. The monument was erected in 1923. It was not designed by Wardell, as suggested by C Miley. Wardell died in 1899.

10 LRW files (SLV); *Sun*, 27 September 1977.

11 Whitney King, to Williams, 14 October 1959 recording the vestry's appreciation of the distinguished service rendered by Williams. (private papers).

central panel contributes to the theme of the series and the side panels hold affiliated symbols and memorial plaques.<sup>12</sup>

During discussions to place five memorials in mosaic on the walls, Kerr-Morgan's sketch was considered, and Williams said there was too much colour in it. He set out three problems to be worked through with the client and craftsman. These were colour, proportion of the church, and character of material. He stressed that 'any attempt to spot the walls indiscriminately with isolated memorials must be avoided ... and that the proposed mosaic work should, in tone not come into competition with the coloured glass windows, but be produced in quiet tones only, and be complementary to one another'.<sup>13</sup>

He emphasised that the proportion of the church must be considered, as the feeling of the leading horizontal line of the aisle should not be interfered with. 'This will be maintained by retaining the stone string mould and having each unit designed in rectangular form as indicated on drawing ... (so that) they will not compete with the window shapes, but will form a pleasing accentuation of the curved heads'. He said that 'the surrounding framework and tracery of the panel would be in low relief ... thus helping the work to assimilate with the wall and not appear an excrescence thereon'. He stipulated that mosaic is essentially a material for wall decoration and that he did not consider that 'timber is a fitting surround for it. The tracery surround, mullions, etc. can, with satisfactory results, be cast in pressed cement and securely built to the wall, and resting on the string mould as a sound base'.<sup>14</sup>

St Ambrose Memorial church, Gilgandra, NSW, is unique in its genesis. It had been dedicated in 1921 after its namesake in Bournemouth, England, which donated funds towards a small parish in the British empire with the most outstanding war service record.<sup>15</sup> Williams recounted that three Gilgandra brothers enlisted together, and while walking to Sydney encouraged other young men to join them, receiving hospitality and shelter from the local people, and by the time they reached their destination had gathered sufficient men to form an entire battalion.<sup>16</sup>

41 (a)

For this church he concentrated on the beauty of form rather than elaborate ornamentation, with his fine version of the Arts and Crafts style, adapted to Australian conditions. A cloister shields the nave from the sun and a good system of ventilation cools the building in summer. The circular apse with its splendid detailing, symmetrical transepts, windows way off centre, the unusual external porch and the spiky spire of the bellcote, create an amazing effect. Walls were built of red bricks with cut and struck joints inside and out, while instead of plaster inside, projecting brickwork was used for decoration

41 (b)

41 (c)

12 The theme on the north side portrays the Old Testament history, while those on the south depict scenes from the history of the Anglican Church, with each series running from the front of the church to the back.

13 Williams to Vestry, 1 December 1939 (SLV).

14 Williams to Vestry, 1939; Kerr-Morgan, to Williams, 1 December 1939. The firm made opus sectile mosaic tablets for the north and south walls. Brooks Robinson to Reverend H M Arrowsmith, 15 May 1947 (SLV).

15 Conditions of the bequest stipulated that the church be named after its namesake.

16 Conversation with Williams, and personal tapes.

to the arches and other areas. Because of the instability of the black soil, drying out in summer and soggy in winter, the church was built on a reinforced concrete core. The walls were strengthened with concrete columns, while cypress pine timber was used throughout as a white ant deterrent. St Ambrose replaced the small and hopelessly decayed parish church, but the side chapel bears the name of the former Church of the Resurrection, which contains two beautiful stained glass windows made by Christian Waller.<sup>17</sup> 41 (d)

The small and graceful Alice Boston Memorial Church of St David, Cooe, Tasmania, was funded by Mrs Boston as a monument to her daughter. It was built of locally made bricks with a splendid open timbered roof. The interior is restful and refined, with its soft diffused lighting and fine furnishings.<sup>18</sup> At St Paul's Pro-cathedral, Hay, NSW a canopy and reredos above the altar were erected as a memorial to Archbishop R C Halse, previously bishop of the Riverina. 41 (e)  
41 (f)  
41 (g)

Towers were often included in designs, but added later, sometimes as memorials. All Saints' Preston, commemorates those who died in wars.<sup>19</sup> The impressive fifteen metre tower is surmounted by a six metre stainless steel cross, the reflection of which can be seen as a silvery symbol of the faith, and at times is reputedly too bright to look upon.<sup>20</sup> 41 (h)

An unpretentious honour board in All Saints', Newtown, was conceived in the Gothic spirit in the form of a triptych, the side panels of which move on hinges. The central panel holds a Crucifix, executed by Tranthim-Fryer, and is set amidst simple Gothic tracery, which beauty is accentuated by the depth of carving. Made of Tasmanian oak to Williams's design, it 'reflects the care, refinement and spirituality that is characteristic of his work'.<sup>21</sup>

A lych gate was a fitting addition to a church complex, being a roofed gateway to the church yard, and the customary halting place to rest the coffin during a funeral procession to the grave site. For St Stephen's, Peak Hill, NSW, Caslake was engaged to make the wrought iron gates.<sup>22</sup>

Williams designed many memorials, large and small, and of varying materials in St Paul's cathedral, Melbourne. The bronze Zelman and Grey Smith tablets on the south wall were modelled by the skilful artist Tranthim-Fryer. The richly carved telescopic canopy of blackwood for the font is an outstanding piece of craftsmanship. Of considerable interest is the splendid figure of the pelican in her piety on the cresting of the canopy. Opus sectile 42 (a)  
42 (b)  
42 (c-f)

17 Conversation with Williams; and LRW files (SLV) The story about this church and the soldiers concerned, was made into a documentary and screened on the ABC in 1995. Also see *Church Standard* (4 August 1922) .

18 The furnishings of Tasmanian oak were made by local craftsmen to Williams's design in 1932. The main entrance is through the tower porch set at the north-west angle, the tower being visible for great distances along the coast.

19 Built in 1956 it honours the fallen in both world wars, Korea and Malaya.

20 Another example is the tower added to St Margaret's, Mildura.

21 *Geelong Advertiser*, 16 October 1920. It was erected to honour 30 parishioners who died, and carries the names of those servicemen and women who served and returned.

22 Williams informed the vicar that 'Caslake was the best wrought iron worker in the area'. Williams to Reverend H F Davy, 31 January 1945 ; 9 February 1945 (SLV).

tablets record the names of the Bishops and Archbishops of Melbourne since the foundation of the See, while another plaque lists the names of the Deans of Melbourne.

43

The three marble stalls comprise the Sir George Turner memorial in the sanctuary. The Archbishop's stall is flanked by those for his chaplains or visiting bishops. The stalls<sup>23</sup> have a band of foliated cresting, with the back of the central panel rising higher, marking the order of precedence. The Arms of the Diocese are incorporated in this panel, while the design of the mitre closely resembles that worn by St Thomas a'Beckett.<sup>24</sup> Among the many tablets on the south wall are memorials to Archbishop Frederick Waldegrave Head and Archbishop Joseph John Booth.

43

Williams excelled in the memorial to General Sir Harry Chauvel G.C.M.G, K.C.B, Commander of the Desert Mounted Corps in Syria in the 1914-1918 War, and a lay canon of St Paul's cathedral. The large bronze plaque on the north wall, depicts this eminent soldier seated on his horse in an Australian setting. The whole work bordered with realistic gum leaves and gum nuts was executed by local craftsmen. In selecting Lenegan to do the tablet, Williams insisted that the modeller 'who is an artist in such work, execute the modelling of the whole of the tablet'. He thanked the secretary, R.S.S.&A. League for the invaluable assistance by Colonel C H Finlayson, in examining the figure and horse, and advising where adjustments were needed.<sup>25</sup>

43

Williams designed a prayer desk and stall for the Royal Military College Duntroon, Canberra, to be given by all ranks of the College in memory of their Chaplain, Padre Frederick H Bashford.<sup>26</sup>

Geelong Grammar School Chapel, Corio was built to a revised design by North & Williams, and completed by Williams, who designed many of the memorials. The chapel contains memorials to both World Wars, the first part of the designs being World War I memorials, but the rood screen is a World War II memorial. On the altar rails<sup>27</sup> the gum-leaf motif dominates the carving on the blackwood rails, which are linked in the centre by a hand wrought iron metal chain, while the rectangular links of this chain are decorated with a central ornament of oxidised silver.<sup>28</sup> The east end window features Williams's characteristic leaflike pattern, seen in many of his well known churches. He designed the rose tracery making sure the window was not placed in the apex of the wall, so that it would not be cut off from view by

44

44

23 J Swain & Sons, working to Williams's design made these marble stalls.

24 The work was executed in Australian marbles of varying tones, working out from a darker surround to a light colour or highlight at the central panel

25 Williams to C Joyce, Secretary R.S.S.&A. Imperial League, 10 July 1952. Joyce replied, 'the President and Executive desire to convey their warmest appreciation of the fine tablet, designed and erected under your supervision in memory of the late General Sir Harry Chauvel'. Joyce to Williams, 29 August 1952 (SLV).

26 Lt Colonel. C A E Fraser, M.B.E., to Williams, 9 February 1953 (SLV). Williams recommended Lenegan saying he was 'unequalled for such work in Australia'. The College expressed appreciation with the style and excellent execution of the work.

27 Dedicated in 1922, in memory of Noel Stratton White, a former student.

28 LRW files (SLV); *Geelong Advertiser* (25 September 1922).

the heavy beam.<sup>29</sup>

The timber rood screen in the school Chapel was donated by a western district family in memory of their son and all his crew killed in an air raid. The sense of separation between chancel, choir and nave was avoided by varying the spaces between the supports and raising the openings with a gradation of heights, thus giving a feeling of leading into the east end, rather than like so many screens, that of an exclusion.<sup>30</sup> Williams hoped 'the whole work builds up to what I feel should be a spacious joyous entry to the east'.<sup>31</sup> Dr Darling said 'there is nothing but universal approval of the screen ...'.<sup>32</sup>

One of Williams's finest works is the St Mark's Chapel, Flinders (Westernport) Naval Depot.<sup>33</sup> This well proportioned building was designed in a modern Gothic style, and built of autumn-tinted Warrandyte freestone, a stratified stone, which readily splits, not requiring hand dressing and falling into natural shapes. He preferred working with stone,<sup>34</sup> when affordable, and deemed it appropriate for this important monument. A prominent feature is the square, belfry-louvred windowed tower, 69ft (21 m) high, surmounted by a flagpole. This is balanced on the other side of the main entrance by a baptistry. At the base of the tower inside the chapel, rests the Book of Remembrance containing the names of R A N personnel, who lost their lives in two world wars.<sup>35</sup>

The west end with its main ceremonial entrance leads into the principal doorway, which is dominated by an arch, in the deep recess of which, is a large traceried window filled with stained glass. The narthex opens into a spacious nave, where internal buttresses were used to produce extra space,<sup>36</sup> and the sanctuary planned on generous lines. The chapel is so designed that the west and east ends, by reason of certain contracting lines in the planning, give a sense of added height. The impressive interior with its high, open timbered roof, supported by large roof trusses, contains exquisite furnishings, designed by Williams and made by Australian craftsmen, artists and artisans.

29 Presented by Old Boys and friends of the school in memory of Francis Edward Brown D D, Headmaster 1912-1929. Napier Waller made the stained glass rose window.

30 Conversation with Williams (personal tapes).

31 Williams to Dr J R Darling, headmaster, 7 August 1947 (SLV).

32 Darling to Williams, 27 April 1950 (SLV); N L Bees, a parishioner, to Williams, 26 April 1950. He said, '... you and the craftsman who did the carving are to be congratulated on the work'. His Gothic design was of a lacey nature, with the figures under the canopies - possibly depicting St George and St Alban, and on the other side two angels. The two shields bear the inscription and the Arms of the Diocese of Melbourne, respectively. Kellock made the memorial window at the west end.

33 Rt Revd W Mackie, Bishop of Geelong, to Williams, 5 October 1949 (SLV). He said 'I am glad to hear that you have been commissioned to produce a plan for the Naval Chapel ... I can think of nobody who could do it better'.

34 Captain Bridge, RAN to Williams, 31 August 1951, offered to provide specialised naval manpower (demolition squad) to increase the supply of stone to the building in greater quantities. The Director of Naval Works, Captain C W Bridge to J McAuley, Warrandyte, 11 November 1952.

35 One of the chapel's treasures is an altar book, signed by the Queen Mother and bound in the Royal library at Windsor Castle. *Anglican* (21 May 1954).

36 Williams claimed to have pioneered the use of internal buttresses in Victoria, at St Paul's, Caulfield, and this was later copied by others. Conversation with Williams.

On the north wall near the pulpit a perpetual light shines on a cast bronze memorial tablet commemorating those who sacrificed their lives.<sup>37</sup> The litany desk and its shield in the sanctuary are fine pieces of craftsmanship.

46

Williams said 'I know that you will understand and agree that the furniture for a church should be designed by the architect responsible for the church design ... and any furniture, for it is only in that way that a complete harmony of effect can be obtained, as well as the advantage of being able to obtain competitive tenders and a full consideration of all interrelated problems'. The rather unusual pulpit was made with curved bricks to represent the prow of a ship, and curved bricks were also used for the lectern.<sup>38</sup>

47

When discussing pews for the Chapel, those in Scotch College Chapel were inspected, and it was unanimously agreed, 'that in no way did they compare with the pews designed by Mr Williams'.<sup>39</sup> Each carved pew carries the crest of the town which funded the work. The screen, separating the side chapel from the nave, culminates in a cresting which resembles a wave-like motif. The memorials from the drill hall chapel and various donated items<sup>40</sup> were embodied in the new chapel. Taylor-Kellock<sup>41</sup> made all the stained glass windows honouring RAN crews and ships lost in action,

48

49

T McCarthy's firm was recommended for the woodwork, which was executed to the required finish.<sup>42</sup> The Navy Department undertook to collect the timber for this commission from the North Queensland Sawmillers'

37 Williams engaged William Bedford to make the tablet and to allow for skilled modelling, preferably by Lenegan', referring the firm to the Harry Chauvel tablet in St Paul's cathedral, Melbourne. He requested a similar finish, and pleasing bronze bolt heads. 'The lettering to be raised and the face and letters to be lightly polished' Williams to W.Bedford, 18 February 1954.

38 These moulded bricks were specially made by the Northcote Brick Company (SLV).

39 Minutes of Memorial Chapel Committee meeting at FND, 29 February 1952 (SLV).

40 a) Memorial books containing names of those who gave their lives in World Wars 1 & II were given by the Naval Board.  
b) Piece of block marble from St. Paul's Cathedral, London.  
c) Tile from the Temple Church, London is one of three sent to Australia. The others are in St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne and St Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney.  
d) Stone from the House of Commons.  
e) Panel of marble from the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth. Countless other memorials were donated by families and friends of navy personnel lost at sea. LRW files (SLV), 16 April 1952.

41 See chapter on stained glass for full details.

42 Williams to Engineer Captain C Bridge, Director of Naval Works, 19 February 1952. 'All woodwork to be scraped and worked to a smooth and even surface and the whole skilfully limed (flake white) and the whole thoroughly ... finished with the best quality clear lacquer sprayed on and semi-dull finished to approval; or alternatively - if so directed in writing by the architect ... in lieu of the clear lacquer, finish all the work thoroughly with beeswax, well rubbed in with a pad, giving a semi-dull finish. All the fore-going limed and lacquered (or beeswaxed) finished work to be skilfully executed by skilled tradesmen, and the finished work to be guaranteed permanently hard and non-marking of clothing. Allow for staining and skilfully dull-polishing'. Williams insisted on this timber preparation, and although an old fashioned procedure produced an excellent patina. Conversation with McCarthy.



Association, and deliver it to Melbourne.<sup>43</sup> It was shipped via *HMAS Culgoa*.<sup>44</sup> and taken by Navy personnel to McCarthy's factory,<sup>45</sup> where all the furnishings, including forty pews, screens, the altar and rails, litany desk, &c. were made.<sup>46</sup> Williams said ... 'be careful in cutting the timber, and that any black bean not used for the Chapel was to become the property of the Navy Department'.<sup>47</sup> Even though McCarthy had worked for him for years, he was requested to 'finish the work by spraying ... and ... first submit samples for approval'.<sup>48</sup>

S A Clarke of CSIRO informed Williams that 'under no circumstances should the joinery be made up from incompletely dry material, with the idea of allowing it to complete its seasoning in position, as this could lead to dissatisfaction, because of the risk of shrinkage, and possibly some cracking after installation'.<sup>49</sup> Before making the altar cross, McCarthy was informed that 'the workmanship to be the most skilled ... (employing) your very best craftsmen ... The whole of the work to be dead true and perfectly upright from all directions ... and you to guarantee that it will not warp or twist ... '<sup>50</sup>

Working to Williams's designs, Langcake executed all the wood carving,<sup>51</sup> which included forty coats of arms of Australian towns, and the names and mottoes of ships as stated by the architect. Williams stipulated that he had to take particular care, because of the fineness of some of the features, 'such as the naval crown', especially the lettering of names, mottoes, motifs and devices in the coats of arms, and bearing 'in mind that each coat of arms will be different ... The various coats of arms and lettering for names of ships and mottoes to be in relief, finished with a smooth surface so that they may be effectively coloured by a selected colourist ... '<sup>52</sup> He thanked Langcake for the 'care, interest and skill ... and untiring attention to this work ... (which) is very much appreciated ... the finished carving gives great pleasure ... '<sup>53</sup> He

49

- 
- 43 The consignment, totalling approximately 'thirty tons of the finest black bean, comprising some 3,478 super feet'. One super foot equals 0.00236 m<sup>3</sup>. (information kindly supplied by Professor Miles Lewis).
- 44 Commodore H J Buchanan, D.S.O. RAN, to Williams, 12 February 1952. The specially selected timber was produced at El Arish, 83 miles distant from Cairns, and transported by the Navy to CSIRO, where it was kiln dried free of charge. Buchanan to Williams, 14 February 1952. Many of the expenses incurred in winning the timber, including Customs' dues, delivery, &c. were waived for this important monument. Conversation with McCarthy.
- 45 Williams to McCarthy, 19 March 1952, informing him that when the timber has been kiln dried it will be delivered to his factory and to stack carefully and fully insure.
- 46 McCarthy signed an agreement to provide and fix furniture for the Chapel FND, conforming to the specification &c, as prepared by Williams, 11 March 1952 (SLV).
- 47 Williams to McCarthy, 23 February 1952 (SLV).
- 48 Williams to McCarthy, 11 March 1952 (SLV).
- 49 S A Clarke, Chief of Division of Forest Products, CSIRO, to Williams, 18 October 1951
- 50 Williams to McCarthy, 28 September 1953. Extra black bean blocks were specially kiln-dried for the dolphins, which support the altar rails, and the underside of the hardwood kneeling boards. Williams to McCarthy, 15 April 1952 (SLV).
- 51 The carving comprised the litany desk, altar, prayer desk, and chaplains' stalls, communion rails, dolphin motifs and tracery panels, &c.
- 52 Williams to Langcake, 30 July 1951. F T Warry executed the colouring and gilding of the coats of arms, altar rails, &c. Williams to F T Warry & Son, 24 March 1952 (SLV).
- 53 Williams to Langcake 20 May 1954 (SLV).

thanked McCarthy saying 'I would ... like to express my appreciation of your unfailing co-operation given to this work throughout, and ... for your skilled workmanship. The work ... has been much admired and many people enquire who made the furniture'.<sup>54</sup> McCarthy was duly proud of his staff.<sup>55</sup>

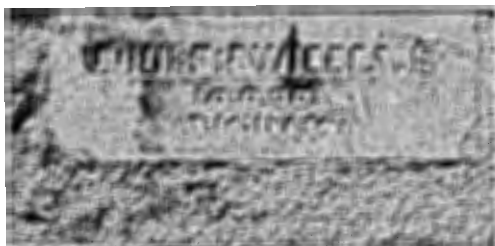
In this building, Williams has displayed his unique feeling for mass, space and height, imbuing the chapel with great dignity, imparting an atmosphere of peace and reverence, and providing a fitting tribute to the servicemen and women who died in two world wars.

A great deal of thought went into the monuments and memorials, large and small, which Williams designed, and they were characterised by grace, beauty and dignity. Such works reflect a fertile imagination in the diversity of materials he employed, to suit the myriad monuments he was requested to devise for churches, chapels and cathedrals in the various states of Australia.

54 Williams to McCarthy, 9 June 1954 (SLV).

55 Conversation with McCarthy, who praised his staff for their dedication to this work.

## MURALS



Williams, the ecclesiologist, was fully aware of the beauty of murals and this form of decoration for his churches. He sought out and employed some of the finest artists of the day to execute these embellishments, and concerned himself with every phase of the work.

He had employed Christian Waller continuously since the early thirties making his stained glass windows, and kept a close eye on all aspects of her artistic output. He would have been conversant with the mural oil on canvas she executed for the Fawkner Crematorium, and would have had no hesitation in commissioning her for his church murals.

She was one of our most important religious artists and in 1942 when being interviewed expressed some concept of her spirituality saying, that 'there are two words printed on my consciousness ... work and God. Everything else must come secondary'.<sup>1</sup> These deep spiritual sentiments are expressed in the text she wrote for the Kernot mural.<sup>2</sup>

When the Walter Kernot memorial was proposed for the 1943 centenary of Christ Church, Geelong, Williams requested Waller to make a mural painting for the west wall, approximately 2.9 x 4.0 m<sup>3</sup> and she suggested 'that the panels should be made of 1/2" wall board, such as masonite fixed on a wooden frame, with canvas attached'.<sup>4</sup> This impressive Art Deco oil on canvas painting depicting 'The Adoration' is one of her finest works.<sup>5</sup>

50

Williams discussed the memorial with the donor, Mrs Kernot, saying, 'I have given careful thought to the proposal for the mural painting and have evolved a tentative sketch design indicating the architectural side of the work, that is, determining the general proportion, position and the blending

- 1 Mollie Westhoven, 'She Copes with a Five Year Queue ...', *Argus Woman's Magazine*, *Argus*, Melbourne (17 July 1948), pp 1-2.
- 2 Christian wrote the words in memory of the late Walter C Kernot. The text formed the front page of the dedication pamphlet for the service on Sunday, 18 July 1943.
- 3 Williams to Christian Waller, 10 December 1941 (SLV).
- 4 C Waller to Williams, 9 May 1942 (SLV).
- 5 See appendix under 'murals'.

in with the architectural surroundings. You will note that the tablet would ultimately become part of the general memorial instead of an isolated feature...and the later memorial doors,<sup>6</sup> jamb panelling and panels at the base of the mural, would link up in sympathy with the surrounding mural'.<sup>7</sup> He designed the pressed cement canopy,<sup>8</sup> to protect the mural painting, and to ensure it harmonised with the work carried out at the west end of the nave.

Williams, took a keen interest in art, was quite a reasonable painter himself, and kept up to date with the work of Victorian artists. Napier Waller, had for many years, been supplying stained glass and mosaics for Williams, who was acquainted with his large ornamental allegories done in watercolour and other pictorial media.<sup>9</sup> He requested him to carry out murals for the churches he had designed, and for others where he had made alterations and additions. At All Saints' Newtown, Geelong, Waller's two splendid panels, the 'Annunciation' and 'Crucifixion' adorn the east wall flanking the chancel arch,<sup>10</sup> while at St Stephen's church, Gardenvale, his altarpiece depicts Christ, St Stephen and St John the Divine.<sup>11</sup>

51 (a)  
51 (b)

St Matthew's, East Geelong, is a delightful mellow toned brick<sup>12</sup> church with plastered walls and openable steel framed windows, which allow a through current of air in summer. Waller's expertise is seen in the altarpiece of 'The Good Shepherd',<sup>13</sup> and together with Christian's work and that of Robert Prenzel, typifies the coordination between Williams and his excellent artists.

From 1952 to 1958 Waller was fully occupied with designing and completing the largest mosaic extant in Australia, together with the stained glass for the Hall of Memory at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. It was a huge and challenging undertaking rising 26m to the cupola of the dome.<sup>14</sup> He said 'I found great satisfaction with my work for the Hall of Memory'.

Waller believed mural art is a unit of architecture which, more than any other sort of art, reflects and is definitely linked to the life of the people. He also said that in his watercolours he was trying to do on a small scale what should be done, and could be done far better, on a large scale in wall decorations.<sup>15</sup>

In 1962 Williams briefed him on the composition of the design for the

6 Carved by E Lenegan.

7 Williams to Mrs Walter Kernot, 28 April 1942 (SLV).

8 Made by Picton Hopkins.

9 These included his large spectacular murals for the Melbourne Town Hall, Melbourne Public Library and the 'Myer Mural Hall', those murals for Menzies Hotel and Royal Insurance Company (both demolished) but recovered, the former in a private collection, and the latter in the School of Architecture, Melbourne University; and T & G Life Assurance Building, Melbourne.

10 Williams to Canon Wheeler, 10 December 1928 (SLV).

11 LRW files 1961 (SLV).

12 The bricks were from the North Geelong works (SLV),

13 Williams to Waller, 6 December 1946 (SLV).

14 Nicholas Draffin, *The Art of M Napier Waller* (Melbourne 1978), p 9. Also see Alan McCulloch, *Encyclopedia of Australian Art*, (Melbourne 1977), p 568.

15 Napier Waller quoted in Draffin p 5.

proposed mural in the surviving portion of old St Andrew's church, Brighton,<sup>16</sup> enclosing a rough tracing of the outline of the tracery work, for what had originally been the west window in the old nave. He informed Waller that the mural 'will cover up the inside of this window so that it will be invisible from the inside' and that the tracery window would be filled with solid blocks of pressed cement, charcoal black finish, adding that the three panels and the quatrefoils above to be finished with Venetian mosaic.<sup>17</sup>

Waller told Williams that he 'would paint to your full approval, in matt oil colours, on canvas ... this mural would be approximately 10' [3.048 metres] by 18'3" [5.56 metres] with the framing and hardboard construction ... supplied by the builder'. He pointed out that as the canvas would be pasted down to certain areas of hardboard, it would be preferable for the builders to have a rectangular pattern of the desirable divisions of the hardboard, having in mind the mural design and suitable fixing sizes.<sup>18</sup> Williams said the 'measurement of 17 ft. 10" [5.43 metres] given you some days ago is to a perspective line as seen from a distance of about 12 ft [3.66 metres] from the mural. A line level with top of the canopy would give the dimension 18 ft 2" [5.54 metres], adding 'Your design is very much liked'.<sup>19</sup>

Waller wished to be present at the fixing of the mural, and stressed that the pattern of the board should be in areas as in his sketch plan. He suggested that the framing and hardboard be set up complete, and then the hardboard only sent to his studio after the sheets were unscrewed from the fixed frame. He recommended that the studs or batten lines be chalked on the back of the hardboard to prevent searching over the painted work for screw positions when being assembled, and to avoid joints and screws coming into important details of the mural.<sup>20</sup> He told Williams the framing was a very thorough coverage of what he wanted, and the sheets could be conveniently lifted as units and screwed in the sample screw holes.<sup>21</sup>

This impressive mural replaces the shattered west window in the Pioneer Chapel.<sup>22</sup> The large modernistic work depicts the arrival of Brighton's first settlers landing from Port Phillip Bay, who then set about constructing their church. This activity takes place in the presence of a choir of angels, who represent the angels and seven churches of the Apocalypse of St John, while Abraham and Sarah, survey the promised land.<sup>23</sup> The mural is a fitting tribute to those early pioneers, who founded the first St Andrew's church, and to the following generations of parishioners, including Williams, who worshipped there, and helped build up one of Brighton's best known landmarks.

51 (c)

51 (d)

16 Now known as the Pioneers chapel. The mural measures 40 x 20ft (12.3 x 6.1 m).

17 Williams to N Waller, 21 June 1962 (SLV).

18 Waller to Williams, 16 August 1962 (SLV); 22 September 1962 (SLV).

19 Williams to Waller, 31 August 1962 (SLV).

20 Waller to Williams, 16 September 1962 (SLV).

21 Waller to Williams, 22 September 1962 (SLV).

22 The rest of St Andrew's church was irrevocably destroyed and rebuilt in 1962 to Williams's design.

23 Nicholas Draffin, *The Art of M Napier Waller*, Melbourne, 1978, p 76.

Len Annois was one of Melbourne's best known artists, mainly of watercolours and murals, also a graphic artist. In 1958 he was honoured as the first Australian ever to be appointed a full member of the Royal Watercolour Society in Britain, the water-colourists' equivalent of the Royal Academy. Sir Daryl Lindsay was an associate member at that time.<sup>24</sup> Annois's *magnum opus* was the 'Sisson Mural' he did for the Victorian Pharmacy College in 1958-61, measuring 19.20 metres x 7 metres.<sup>25</sup>

He completed his first mural the 'Buon Fresco' at Melbourne High School in 1956 and others followed. He considered himself fortunate to be practising his fresco painting at a time when Australian architects were showing enormous enthusiasm for the decorative skills of the various craftsmen. However he was astute enough to seize this opportunity of meeting this need not only with painting frescoes, but orthodox watercolours as well. Williams, who was very interested in painting watercolours himself, knew Annois well, and greatly admired his work.<sup>26</sup> He consulted with him about the mural decoration at the east end of St John's church, Camberwell, which had been rebuilt to Williams's design.<sup>27</sup> Rosemary remembers sitting for her father as a model for the Virgin Mary, when he was doing his drawings for the painting of the 'Adoration' at St John's.<sup>28</sup>

Annois carried out the mural reredos, measuring 16 ft [4.8 metres] by 10 ft [3 metres], which was executed on lime plaster in a medium called fresco secco, similar to the famous murals in Italy. It was modernistic in treatment and rich in many colours. He worked in close cooperation with Williams and the plasterer, in the preparation of the wall to be decorated, and carefully planned his work in various stages. He advised Williams that he proposed to commence the final cartoons on 14 September; complete the final cartoons on 20 October; commence drawing the mural on 22 October and complete painting the mural on 22 November.<sup>29</sup> In correspondence with Williams he set out his requirements concerning the plaster 'in curing' before use on the east wall of the sanctuary.<sup>30</sup>

52 (a)

Williams was mindful that considerable skill was needed for a perfect finish,

24 See appendix.

25 *The Australian Journal of Pharmacy*, 31 October 1966, p 795; Hetherington, p 93.

26 The families of Williams, Annois and the author met at Airey's Inlet. There was quite an artists' colony there, including well known artists, such as Phyl Waterhouse, Charles Bush, Max Sherlock, David Newbry, Bob Harding, Ken McDonald, David Taylor, and others who frequently painted interesting facets of the local scene and exhibited their work in Melbourne. Alexander and Amalie Colquhoun, well-known husband and wife artists, were friends of Williams and were frequently seen painting at Airey's Inlet. They sometimes exhibited in partnership and conducted an art school in Melbourne.

27 This church was gutted by fire in 1955, and rebuilt in 1957-8 including restoration of the tower. The mural of the 'Adoration' was in memory of James Jackson.

28 Conversation with Rosemary.

29 Annois to Williams, 14 July 1957; 13 September 1957 (SLV).

30 He advised that the special lime putty was obtainable from Picton Hopkins, Richmond, and the sand from Fregon Brothers, Oakleigh. See appendix for his requirements in preparing the wall before painting.



and he made sure that both plasterer and painter worked together to achieve this result. He reinforced Annois's special requirements when he wrote out the specification for the plasterer: -

### General

Sand to be clean, sharp, washed white sand (Mr. Annois suggests Fregon Bros, Oakleigh, as suitable suppliers) The coarse particles must be sifted out for the fine finishing coat.

### Lime Putty

Special putty obtainable from Picton Hopkins, Richmond. This putty must cure for three months, or longer, before use.

### Joints

Allow for raking all brick joints and chipping the face of the bricks so as to provide a good key for the plaster.

### Application: -

#### Base Coat

1 part lime putty  
3 parts clean white sand

#### Brickwork

To be pricked up with cement mortar first, then base lime mortar laid to thickness and roughened to receive final coat.

#### Finishing Coat

1 part lime putty  
2 parts clean white sand

Apply 1/4" thick coat and trowel to a fine smooth surface

Allow 3 months "in curing"<sup>31</sup>

As a competent artist, Annois understood the difficulties confronting him, namely that the mural had to be viewed from any and all positions in the church, and to read well at a distance or relatively close up. He also realised that the abundant detail of the work, and the great variety of symbols would offer a message, which would not easily be exhausted as it was regularly viewed by worshippers. This fine mural reredos depicting 'The Adoration'<sup>32</sup> is the focal point of the altar, while his other comparatively small, but equally well executed mural, 'Fishers of Men',<sup>33</sup> is placed above the western door. Williams praised the artist's work, saying it considerably enhanced the high altar, which he always maintained, must be the most important feature in the church.<sup>34</sup>

52 (b)

31 LRW files (SLV).

32 Annois successfully portrayed the general theme of 'Worship' with the Madonna and Child as the dominant figures. The white Dove symbolised the Holy Spirit, while the Shepherds and the Three Wise Men were portrayed offering their symbolic gifts in an attitude of reverence and worship, whilst expressing humility in their adoration.

33 This mural differs from the very religious intensity of the altar reredos, being more representative of the everyday life of the people, as they leave the church.-

34 Conversation with Williams.

These murals carried out by famous artists, working in association with an ecclesiastical architect, who appreciated the decorative skills of contemporary artists, demonstrates a revival of former close ties between the Church and artists.



The mural is a large, abstract composition, possibly a sketch or a very faded reproduction of a wall painting. It features a central, somewhat circular motif with radiating lines and a complex, interlocking pattern of shapes and lines. The overall effect is one of a highly decorative and intricate design, typical of the style of the period.

The mural is a large, abstract composition, possibly a sketch or a very faded reproduction of a wall painting. It features a central, somewhat circular motif with radiating lines and a complex, interlocking pattern of shapes and lines. The overall effect is one of a highly decorative and intricate design, typical of the style of the period.

The mural is a large, abstract composition, possibly a sketch or a very faded reproduction of a wall painting. It features a central, somewhat circular motif with radiating lines and a complex, interlocking pattern of shapes and lines. The overall effect is one of a highly decorative and intricate design, typical of the style of the period.

The mural is a large, abstract composition, possibly a sketch or a very faded reproduction of a wall painting. It features a central, somewhat circular motif with radiating lines and a complex, interlocking pattern of shapes and lines. The overall effect is one of a highly decorative and intricate design, typical of the style of the period.

## STAINED GLASS



Williams was a very astute architect, who chose all his craftsmen carefully, particularly those who supplied stained glass, as he had very strong views about adornments to his buildings. He had gained valuable experience working with North, who had a profound knowledge of English history and British church history, and was well versed in heraldry, as was evident in the heraldic symbols he designed for his stained glass and other furnishings.

While some architects still patronised overseas firms, Williams concentrated on the local talent. He advised churchmen to keep in mind that here in Australia our sunlight is intense and that large windows at the west and east ends are undesirable, and that a glare of light should be avoided, while windows high up and to the sides are usually effective -

never thoughtlessly commence the execution of a stained glass window. Browse over the problems, and very carefully select your artist in stained glass, for the glass may make or mar your church. It must be reticent in colour, something to be discovered, and not of such arrogant colouring as to thrust itself upon one. Far better is it to have plain glass than have a building marred by gross work. The artist should, if possible, visit the church, study the lighting, and note the colour of the walls, for the glass should form a happy harmony and control the lighting.<sup>1</sup>

Williams understood the medium of stained glass, and generally required that it not be obtrusive, but rather formed a harmonious whole, with a careful distribution of colour, that in no way diminished the significance and beauty of the furnishings. He ensured that the glass was artistically executed, appropriate for its position in the church, met the requirements of the donor, and integrated with the walls and timber furnishings. The light on the glass was carefully controlled, so that it was not bleached out by a strong light falling on it from other openings. Archbishop Lowther Clarke said that 'probably no more harm has been done to Christianity than by stained glass windows',<sup>2</sup> and Williams agreed with the churchman that much glass is artistically feeble, and portrays Christianity in such an unpleasant manner.<sup>3</sup>

1 LRW 'Some phases of Church Architecture in Australia, *The Defender*, 10, 65 (1 December 1929), pp 18-22.

2 *Church of England Messenger* (19 September 1919), p 1067.

3 Williams to Canon A G Horner, 14 September 1933 (SLV).

He engaged most of the same leading artists as his contemporaries, namely, William Montgomery, Brooks Robinson, Mathieson & Gibson, Christian and Napier Waller and David Taylor-Kellock. Before engaging any craftsmen, he meticulously studied examples of their most recent work, discreetly checked they were financially secure, met contract dead-lines, were compatible with other trades, cooperated with contractors, and faithfully produced the work specified.<sup>4</sup>

Williams usually recommended certain procedures for stained glass artists to follow, where applicable. These included the use of protective plate glass for areas exposed to tempest, saying 'the value of such glass is the protection that it gives to the leadwork and its 'putty' filling, for over the course of years and especially in a position that is very exposed to storm, the lead is apt to strain as well as deteriorate'. He pointed out that if glass is so installed it should be thoroughly sealed around all edges and at junctions, and that where horizontal junctions are necessary, these should be wide leads and should correspond in position with the joints of the horizontal joints of the window glass, and also be thoroughly sealed.<sup>5</sup> He said that the glass 'will all need to be most thoroughly pointed up, as the weather drive is very strong'. He suggested that the artist should provide lead trays to all the windows, as such are very necessary.<sup>6</sup> He stressed that memorial glass in the nave windows, should not be heavily stained, but that the artist should arrange his design and selection of colours so that the light value in the nave would not be either unduly dominated or reduced to gloominess. He advised that the artist study the colour of the interior walls, and the degree to which lighting should be retained or controlled by his windows.

He pointed out the reasonably close spacing of the wind or saddle bars in stained glass windows, which have a definite job to do in preventing the glass bending in, and should not be further apart than 13½" (340 mm). He maintained that the artist should, as a first part of his work, space these out in his drawing and then design the glass to suit.<sup>7</sup> Williams instructed the artist that it was his responsibility to double check every opening to be filled with stained glass, while emphasising that it would be necessary for the templates to be secured. He advised that there is sure to be slight variation and that care should be taken so as not to damage the pressed cement tracery work.<sup>8</sup>

Williams usually gave the stained glass artists a relatively free hand, but briefed them on the type of subject matter to be portrayed. He often provided a rough sketch, supplying templates of the tracery and other openings to be filled. Designs and prices were submitted to him and, after consultation with the client, would give instructions to proceed with the cartoons. When he did not approve of a particular design, he had no qualms in stating his views, or where he felt improvements could be made, he said so.<sup>9</sup> His designs met with

4 Conversation with Williams.

5 Williams to Kellock, 7 April 1949, west window, Geelong Grammar School chapel.

6 Williams to Kellock 16 June 1953, Australian Naval Chapel, Flinders (SLV).

7 Williams to Commodore Buchanan, 9 August 1950 (SLV).

8 Williams to Kellock, 6 October 1952 (SLV).

9 Conversation with Williams.

some disquiet at times, when he wished to omit a large east window.<sup>10</sup>

He was a deeply religious man and probably concurred with Beyer's views that 'the art of stained glass came to be regarded as the most truly Christian of all the arts,<sup>11</sup> and as Beverley Sherry points out -

As an art of expression, stained glass comes into its own in the ecclesiastical sphere. In Australia as elsewhere, it has fulfilled its traditional, though not exclusive role as an expressive vehicle for Christianity. At the same time, it has borne witness to the history of the church in Australia.<sup>12</sup>

Because of the significant role of lighting in the interior of a church, it is necessary to balance 'togetherness' with a feeling of space and serenity, something this architect invariably achieved. In his article about St Stephen's Gardenvale, his views on light are relevant :

With the recolouring of the interior of the church, the reflected light at eleven o'clock gives an urge to the desirability of stained glass windows ... One of the functions of an artist in stained glass - and I here stress the word artist - is to give careful consideration both to the tonal quality of the glass ... and the regulation of the amount of light admitted. I incline to the opinion that figures in memorial windows should be less detached from the mind of the beholder ... haloes are unnecessary and are to be deprecated, whilst the hackneyed manner of depicting the various men and women of the Bible needs fresh vigorous interpretation ... <sup>13</sup>

Although historiated windows were still widespread, the concept of design in stained glass was gradually changing, with abstract designs more prevalent. 'Glorious colours became available in 'so called antique glass with which joyous and intriguing patterns ... (could) be created'.<sup>14</sup> To a greater degree than most forms of art, stained glass relies upon skilled craftsmanship, and it is with these people we now concern ourselves.

William Montgomery was English born and trained. He worked with Clayton & Bell, England, and Franz Zettler, Munich, before migrating to Victoria in 1887.<sup>15</sup> He became one of the colony's foremost stained glass artists.<sup>16</sup> Like Charles Winston, he taught the revived principles of stained glass in his lectures and published articles.<sup>17</sup> He favoured antique glass, because, he said, it is the finest of them all and is so named because it imitates old glass. The texture is uneven and varies considerably in depth, with the density of colour changing with the thickness of the glass, which is frequently from 6 to 10 mm.

The beautiful effects present in ancient glass are mainly due to the air bubbles and chance imperfections, which tone down the brightness of the colours and add lustre and brilliancy to the glass. By judiciously selecting the pale portions of the sheet for the figures and the deeper parts for the shadows, the craftsman is able to achieve an

10 Which lashed the eyes of priest & congregation. LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 190.

11 Victor Beyer, *Stained Glass Windows* (London 1964), p 7.

12 Beverley Sherry, *Australia's Historic Stained Glass* (Sydney 1991), p 90.

13 'St Stephen's Parish Paper', Gardenvale, January 1948 (private papers).

14 LRW 'Church Architecture', pp 191-2.

15 J Smith [ed] *Cyclopedia of Victoria* (3 vols, Melbourne, 1903, 1904, 1905), 1, p 603.

16 His work is widely represented in Australia in churches & houses. Smith, loc cit. .

17 He also advertised in the *Advocate* and *Church of England Messenger* .

excellent effect, with a minimum of painting and the window though deep in colour is kept transparent; for no matter how skilfully the paint is applied there is a tendency to opacity.<sup>18</sup>

For All Saints', Canowindra, Montgomery said he could make the figure of Christ more prominent 'quite easily. by making the angels in the foreground to kneel ... they will appear less important...enhancing the dominance of the central figure ... '19 He sent a list of the figures to be portrayed at Geelong Grammar School chapel for approval,<sup>20</sup> and at St John the Baptist, Canberra, said he would get some resemblance to the photo Williams sent him. 78 (f)

Montgomery said,

Candidly my own feeling is against portraiture in stained glass, or ... in any work meant to be decorative. Somehow or other modern types seem out of harmony ... in stained glass, especially the rich colouring, and the lead line.<sup>21</sup>

He designed the windows in the sanctuary, chapel and ambulatory at All Saints' Cathedral, Bathurst. Bishop Long and Williams discussed the series of subjects to be used,<sup>22</sup> but the bishop was critical of some drawings. He liked the face and expression of St Mary, and thought the attitude and draping finely conceived, but not the hands. 'These appear to be not naturally delineated and are unexpressive - rather stilted'. 61-73

He approved of St John, but the face could be improved. The eyes were right, but the face too young and inexperienced ... too untouched by the deeper things of life', the mouth and chin needed to be more rugged and the face 'to have deeper lines of strength and sorrow ... seldom is there justice done to his intellectual capacity, his was the greatest mind of the Apostolic band. In pure intellect and mystic depth he ranks with the greatest ... some of this force of mind should be revealed in the brow He is the Plato of Christian thought, your St John is too much the young lovable enthusiast, too amenable and unscarred. St John was a Son of Thunder ... ruthless in his passion until ... sublimated from fierceness to love.<sup>23</sup>

Bishop Long disliked the Christ figure, 'the feet should be corrected, as it is impossible to nail feet into the beam of the Cross when the body is extended, 'unless the legs are broken first ... the right leg from knee to ankle has an emaciated, if not deformed appearance. He realised the difficulty of getting the face right - while wanting to express not merely the suffering victim of the Italianate School, but the triumphant self oblation.<sup>24</sup> 'The Christ you show in the cartoon does not express what I hope to find in the window'.

18 W Montgomery, 'Glass Painting', paper read by Montgomery on 7 October 1889, before the Victorian Architectural and Engineering Association, *Australasian Builder & Contractors News* (19 October 1889), pp 368-70.

19 Montgomery to Williams, 26 May 1926, as requested by Reverend Weston (SLV).

20 See appendix.

21 Montgomery to Williams 26 May 1926 (SLV).

22 Heroes of Battles - a soldier saint; Heroes of the Lonely Way, Pioneers & explorers, Heroes of social service ... Heroes of Truth, from Socrates to all Martyrs and Confessors; Hero of Love, Our Lord upon the Cross. Long to Williams, 7 June 1926.

23 Bishop Long to Montgomery, 5 July 1927 (SLV).

24 'The Christ who offers his life willingly ... not the reluctant passive sufferer. The Bishop said this ... might be found better in eyes uplifted to Heaven ... '



Bishop Long was showing a reasonable level of interest and perception when he commented on Montgomery's treatment of feet, which can be awkward. However one wonders how this highly competent artist accepted such criticism.

Montgomery said,

of all the decorative arts devoted to the service of the Church, none was more freely used ... than the art of stained glass' ... as a means of expressing the doctrines and ideals of Christianity. Instead of the buildings being filled with plain white glass, 'which made the architecture look bare and unsympathetic' they were suffused with a soft mellow glow which ... gave colour and tone, warmth and sympathy to the architecture ... the old architects were fully aware of the advantages of this rich and varied light on their work, and used stained glass as a legitimate means of enriching and beautifying their own creations<sup>25</sup>

He collaborated with architects and became an articulate spokesman for what he termed 'the true faith' of mosaic method of fabricating stained glass.<sup>26</sup> He was an individualist with artistic aspirations, who designed his own windows and adopted the late Victorian attitude of the rise of the craftsman. He associated with the Victorian Artists' Society and his writings on glass aimed to elevate the craft to that of a fine art. He was proud of his work and signed most pieces. The social background obtaining during the era of his productive years in Australia would have compared with those in England, when John Hardman Powell<sup>27</sup> sought to assert his personality, and refused to be dictated to even by such an eminent architect as William Butterfield.

After Montgomery's death Williams co-operated with Anne Montgomery, about the vesica window for All Saints' Canowindra.<sup>28</sup> His 'Stevens' window Wilson Hall, University of Melbourne, was unfinished at his death in 1927 and completed by Napier Waller, who was a close friend and colleague.

While still ordering stained glass from Montgomery, Williams was watching Brooks Robinson's work.<sup>29</sup> Kerr-Morgan exhibited paintings in the 1947 exhibition at St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne.<sup>30</sup> Because of the improved standard of work, under his management, Williams commissioned him for some stained glass at St Alban's, Griffith and elsewhere. For St Giles's Murrumbidgee, he made the mosaic emblem of the 'Burning Bush' cast into a pressed cement shield.<sup>31</sup> Coloured glass was selected from stock for Holy Trinity, Ulverstone, where Williams aimed at a continuity throughout all the windows, ensuring that the level of daylight would be adequate with the glass graded from cool colours at the west end, to warmer tones near the sanctuary,

10 (d)

25 Montgomery, 'The Art of Glass Painting' paper read before the RVIA on 29 August 1894, *Australasian Builder & Contractor News* (8 September 1894), p 103.

26 'A revived technique of the Middle Ages, using separate pieces of glass for each colour, applying a minimum of enamel paint so that the translucence is retained and the lead-lines employed to accentuate the design ...'. B Sherry, p 33.

27 Paul Thompson, *William Butterfield*, London 1971, pp 463-466.

28 Williams to Mrs Anne Montgomery, 3 September 1927 (SLV). She taught at RMIT.

29 Williams to Reverend E S Woolley, 5 December 1924 (SLV).

30 *Exhibition of Ecclesiastical Art, Church Centenary Celebrations, Melbourne, 1847*.

31 See 'Other Denominations', footnote 10.

so that the eye is lead towards the altar.<sup>32</sup> The firm worked for various architects and denominations, but rarely signed any work.<sup>33</sup>

Williams favoured the Wallers for most of his stained glass windows during the late 1920s and early 1930s. Christian was one of the leading Australian stained glass artists of the twentieth century and one of the first women in Melbourne to take up the craft professionally. Her career as well as her conception of glass work was greatly assisted by Williams, who as diocesan architect was an important client, who built new churches all over Australia, and extended many others. He worked for the Presbyterians and Methodists, and the majority of Christian's church work was for churches with which he was involved.<sup>34</sup> In 1929-30 the Wallers went to England to study stained glass making at the renowned Arts & Crafts' firm of Whall and Whall Ltd. in London. It was run by Veronica Whall,<sup>35</sup> who proved to Christian that women could triumph in this craft.<sup>36</sup>

The early 1930s was an opportune time for the Wallers, as many of the best firms had closed down, and Montgomery, Melbourne's senior stained glass artist of the time had died. Christian was fortunate in her rapport with Williams, who admired her work and she, in turn, enjoyed working for him. As early as 1934 Williams selected her as one of the best stained glass artists and her later work was to prove his judgement correct. Her work was being recognised in the early thirties when she turned increasingly, if not exclusively, to designing and making stained glass windows, and was seen as Australia's leading stained glass artist. Napier was also active in this field, although not as much as Christian. In 1934 she was producing stained glass for Williams in Geelong, Frankston, Canowindra, Gilgandra and West Wyalong.<sup>37</sup>

Christian was overshadowed by her high profile husband, who had produced very public forms of art, including murals and mosaics, while her work, mainly in churches, was less publicised. Moreover, until more recent times, women artists did not receive equal recognition of their skills, even though producing comparable work. Her devotion to designing and fabricating stained glass, together with her deep religiosity, are foremost in her work. Her method, the use of small mosaic-like pieces of glass, was strenuous and time consuming; each window taking approximately six months to implement,

32 Williams to Captain James, 1 February 1961 (SLV).

33 One of the few signed windows is in the north transept of Christ Church, St Kilda, depicting St Paul holding a large sword and richly attired. See G M Moore, pp 283-4.

34 David Thomas, *Exhibition Catalogue, The Art of Christian Waller*, Bendigo Art Gallery, 1992, p 47. The Waller's first contact with Williams possibly occurred during the extensions in 1928 at the Geelong Grammar School chapel, where Napier made the Bell memorial windows. It was the beginning of Williams's patronage of these artists, whom he employed over decades. *Exhibition Catalogue*, pp 43-48.

35 Veronica Whall made four stained glass windows for the Nurses' Memorial chapel, Christchurch Hospital, which are considered amongst the finest in New Zealand.

36 There is an Arts & Crafts tendency in Christian's work, together with other influences notably Pre-Raphaelite painting and French Symbolist art, combined with her strong religious ideals. *Exhibition Catalogue*, p 43.

37 LRW files (SLV).

and she had more commissions than she could possibly fulfil in a lifetime.<sup>38</sup>

Williams greatly admired her work, and on one occasion rejected a list of well-known glass firms submitted to him by Bishop Wylde, saying 'of all the designers in Australia I consider that there are none comparable with Napier and Mrs Waller. I would even place Mrs Waller first.'<sup>39</sup> The *Age* art critic Mary Eagle, who wrote about the retrospective exhibition of her works,<sup>40</sup> said 'it shows her to have been an even better artist than her husband ...' .<sup>41</sup>

Williams chose Christian to make two windows for the Chapel of the Resurrection, St Ambrose, Gilgandra, saying that she was currently designing windows for three of his churches in New South Wales. 'In dealing with these artists you are really dealing with artists and not with factory mechanisation [*sic*] so that you can depend upon securing understanding and sympathetic appreciation of what you desire'. Their work was more costly than commercial glass, because 'the glass is almost mosaic-like, being made up of many smaller pieces than the ordinary trade windows', thus entailing much more lead work, cutting &c 'and ... the personal considerations of the artists, who execute the whole of the work themselves.'<sup>42</sup>

Christian concurred with the Bishop about her windows for Gilgandra,

Perhaps as you say the Good Shepherd is too stern. I am always so afraid of putting the Christ face gentle rather than powerful, that perhaps I always avoid the gentleness too much. I hope that after you are more used to it, the character may appear as watchful and far seeing as I hoped that it would look and thank you for the pleasure I have had with your work.<sup>43</sup>

Her religiosity is present in all her work, and it is probably this meaningful quality in her stained glass which Williams immediately discerned and sought for in his churches. Beyer pointed out that the relationship between light and stained glass was indeed compared to that between soul and body.<sup>44</sup>

Christian was deeply concerned with the spiritual meaning of light, frequently using rays of light to enhance the overall effect of the figure portrayed; this may be the reason she chose the medium of stained glass to express her innermost religious feelings. In many of her windows the composition features a single male figure, and though in a comparatively fixed pose, gives the appearance of moving upwards towards the light. She accomplished this by expansive circuitous curves proceeding across the work from the lower right of the window to the upper left. Richer and darker tones were used at the base of the window, becoming lighter as they progressed upwards; while the head is often surrounded by broken curves of a very light colour, thus giving an effect of the figure soaring toward the light, or perhaps her perception of Heaven. She frequently used this device in her work, which

38 *Exhibition Catalogue*, p 8.

39 Williams to Bishop Wylde, Gilgandra, N S W, 17 April 1934 (SLV).

40 Held at the Deutscher Galleries, Melbourne, in September 1978.

41 Mary Eagle, *Age*, September 1978. Deutscher Catalogue held at (SLV).

42 Williams to Bishop A L Wylde, Gilgandra, 17 April 1934 (SLV).

43 C Waller to Bishop Wylde, 30 November 1934 (SLV).

44 Beyer, p 5.

may be interpreted as spiritual uplift. It is not a common feature in stained glass, but peculiar to Christian and her own spiritual meaning of light.<sup>45</sup>

Her close affinity with Williams enabled her to gain a clear understanding of the use of light and the role of glass in the entire building, expounded in her article in *Manuscripts* in 1931.

There is an opening to fill, not a picture to make; the flatness of the wall should remain unbroken, and light must enter the building. It may come through in beautiful patterns, in rich, glowing colours ... but first and foremost is (it) must look glass - it must be a window ... the design must be 'thought' in glass ... The window is a minor part of the complete structure, so its lines and character should conform architecturally with the whole building.<sup>46</sup>

This highlights Victor Beyer's statement that the 'shape and size of stained glass windows has always depended on the style of the architecture which provided the frame for them.'<sup>47</sup> Beyer also believes that the effect achieved by stained glass is mainly reliant on the colours, while their gradation and combination offers further options to the artist. 'It is in this combination of design with colour that the mysterious nature of light is revealed'.<sup>48</sup>

Christian had a fine feeling for colour and perceived that there are 'myriad shapes and colours to mingle to form intricate patterns and unending designs ...' that the window must be planned in glass before the actual glass ... is ultimately selected'. She spoke of the beauty of colour in nature, saying

what wealth of material there is to choose from, blues ranging from the pale shade of the horizon at sunset to the blue-black of an abyss - crimsons with the smouldering fire of a ruby, merging to black in its deepest parts - reds that burn like live coals, and pinks as delicate as a dragonfly's wings. Greens that even nature might envy, vie with golds richer than the treasure of Solomon.<sup>49</sup>

In neither of the Wallers' work is there any painted architectural tracery or tabernacle work around the windows, and this distinguishes it from traditional stained glass. The traceries in many of Christian's early 1930s windows, notably those of Williams's Canterbury Uniting Church, contain simplified 'gothic' tracery made of stylised leafy branches, while her saints stand on grassy fields with flowers at their feet. This is a frequently used motif, similar to that used by the Whalls, and is a characteristic Arts & Crafts scheme.<sup>50</sup>

Williams acknowledged the quality of her craftsmanship, and perceived in her work the close affinity of his own interpretation of the British Arts and Crafts movement. His plain lancet or square-headed windows suited her work, enabling her to dispense with elaborate window tracery, inconsistent

45 *Exhibition Catalogue*, p 46.

46 *Exhibition Catalogue*, p 47.

47 Beyer, p 8.

48 Beyer, p 13.

49 C Waller, 'A Stained Glass Window', *Manuscripts: The Book Nook Miscellany*, 1 (November 1931), pp 26 and 29.

50 *Exhibition Catalogue*, p 44.

with her Arts & Crafts experience, while her linear and vertical style were compatible with the long, thin windows preferred by him. Both Wallers are among the few artists who were capable of designing really modern glass that integrates with existing ecclesiastical buildings and Victorian glass.<sup>51</sup>

Christian visited America and painted several murals while studying at the temple of Father Divine in New York. On her return she worked in isolation, not seeing even her closest friends, and wrote 'I must be separated from all. One must be alone and know that the One within can meet all needs ...'<sup>52</sup>

When making the windows for St James's church, Ivanhoe, she complained about the non-cooperation of the builder, saying the 'painters had even splashed some calcimine [*sic*] over my borders, and they refused to clean it off ...'<sup>53</sup> Williams intervened remarking 'that the windows are all delightful' and that everything would be rectified to her satisfaction.<sup>54</sup>

74-76

Her creativity is evident in the windows she made for churches in which Williams was involved.<sup>55</sup> In Christ Church, Geelong, close by her mural is a splendid stained glass window based on chapter 5 of *Revelation*. Some of the work of both Christian and Napier Waller relates to the life of St John the Divine.

77

The Wallers shared an interest in symbolism and mysticism, being well versed in the classics, and knowledge of the occult and astrology. Napier was one of Australia's most prolific artists, designing stained glass, mosaics and mural paintings, saying 'most painters look on mosaic and stained glass not as branches of art, but as crafts ... because ... the demands of clients have tended to make these things stereotyped and banal in practice ... he couldn't work with a client at his elbow, telling him what he should do,

nobody can persuade me that mosaic and stained glass, used symbolically and sensitively, offer less scope for self-expression than painting does. I never felt I was losing anything at all by expressing myself in mosaic or in stained glass windows, rather than by painting a picture to be framed and hung on a wall.<sup>56</sup>

In World War I Napier was wounded in action at France, and after having his right arm amputated learned to draw with his left hand,<sup>57</sup> and resumed his art career, painting mostly in watercolour, he eventually decided on ways in which the artist could work with the architect, and his career expanded to being an artist in mosaic, mural paintings and stained glass.<sup>58</sup> After studying

51 *Exhibition Catalogue*, p 48.

52 Manuscript 18 April 1941, cited in Catalogue, *Christian Waller 1895-1956, Stained Glass Studies, Drawings and Prints*, Deutscher Galleries, 8-30 September 1978, held at SLV. She often used, the Gospel of St John to portray her mystical spirituality.

53 Christian Waller to Williams, 29 November 1938.

54 LRW files (SLV).

55 See appendix for list of churches.

56 John Hetherington, *Australian Painters, Forty Profiles*, Melbourne 1967, p 57.

57 He was supported by his wife Christian, who worked as a commercial artist.

58 Hetherington, p 60.

stained glass in England with Veronica Whall, he visited Italy, where he spent some time scrutinising mosaics, particularly in Venice.<sup>59</sup>

Williams said, 'He is an artist with an outstanding reputation. I have had experience of his work, and it possesses a quality unequalled by any other stained glass artist in Australia, with the exception, perhaps of Mr Bustard of Brisbane'.<sup>60</sup> Waller made windows for St Bartholomew's Norwood, South Australia,<sup>61</sup> and the first window on the south wall, the 'Visitation' at All Saints, Newtown. He made an extensive series of stained glass windows for St Paul's Frankston, which implies that he preferred designing large windows as seen in the nave windows reaching almost from floor to ceiling.<sup>62</sup> Those at the west end, and his smaller windows for this church, are equally distinctive. His splendid 'Risen Christ' is the last of a group of six windows in the Warriors' chapel, St Stephen's, Gardenvale. 78 (a)  
78 (b-d)  
78 (e)

He was inspired by William Morris and his followers, and was dedicated to the best traditions of the artist-craftsman. He worked in stained glass for more than forty years and his comprehension of the religious subjects he portrayed and his ingenious use of colour are foremost in his work.<sup>63</sup> Three of his finest windows were made for St Stephen's, Darebin.<sup>64</sup> He was also requested to quote for the chapel windows at St Andrew's, Brighton.<sup>65</sup> 76 (a-c)

Contemporary architects were employing Waller,<sup>66</sup> whose work is in private collections and state galleries. As Herrington says, 'Few artists live to know they have achieved immortality. Napier Waller is probably the only Australian artist of today who can be reasonably confident that his name and his work will be known a century or more hence'.<sup>67</sup> He received the OBE and CMG in recognition of his outstanding art.<sup>68</sup> Williams employed this artist-craftsman to decorate his churches for over thirty years.<sup>69</sup>

Mathieson and Gibson were not patronised as frequently as other firms at the

59 See appendix, also Nicholas Draffin, *The Art of M Napier Waller* (Melbourne 1978).

60 Williams to Canon A G Horner, St Margaret's Church, Mildura, 14 September 1933.

61 Williams to Reverend A E Weston, St Bartholomew's, Norwood, South Australia, 9 December 1937 (SLV). His 'Nativity' and 'Crucifixion' windows are fine examples of the art deco style, with a strongly cubistic and expressionistic approach in the design. J Zimmer *Stained Glass in Australia* (Melbourne 1984), p 106.

62 These depict the seven Churches of St John. LRW files (SLV).

63 Draffin, pp 3-7.

64 'St Luke', a memorial to his friend, Norman MacGeorge, 'Baptism' (Smith window) and 'St Stephen' (Buckley window). They have since been removed to another church.

65 Comprising 'three groups of twin windows, the base of them is at eye level'. 'The subjects ... would be related to modern life 'with a representative figure in each, and in the lower light ... more of a picture to be shown, somewhat after the idea of a bas-relief ... the figures are ... quite small'. Williams to Waller, 14 June; 20 June 1962

66 The Leckie window, Wilson Hall, Melbourne University (saved from fire in 1951), mosaics for Hackett Memorial Building, University of Western Australia, and many others.

67 John Hetherington, 'Napier Waller, A Niche in Tomorrow', in *Australian Painters: Forty Profiles* (Melbourne 1963), p 55.

68 Draffin, p 10.

69 See appendix for some churches with which Williams and Waller were involved.



time. Their work is represented interstate<sup>70</sup> and although Williams employed the artists in some of his churches,<sup>71</sup> he was not impressed with the bulk of their work, compared with that of the Wallers, and Kellock.

David Taylor-Kellock, Edinburgh, was a Fellow of the British Society of Master Glass Painters and associate of the Stained Glass Association of America.<sup>72</sup> He told Williams that

A small three light being unveiled in St Augustine's Moreland, shows the figures used as patterns, subservient to the architecture and not a picture. This type of decoration was of course common to the mosaic decoration of Byzantines. If you know of the modern mosaic windows now being installed in the new Liverpool Cathedral, England, you can ... understand my motives. It will be the first time this particular style of mosaic glass has been designed and constructed in Australia.<sup>73</sup>

He asked him to view his window in St Paul's, Ballarat, and four in Moreland, which 'provide a welcome relief from those pictorial windows which abound in Melbourne'.<sup>74</sup> N M Bunning<sup>75</sup> said many windows in churches were overcrowded and poor aesthetically. 'In contrast one sees in this window ... simplicity of design and excellent distribution of colour. It may be placed in the style between the Victorian and modern periods, but Kellock has developed an advanced style which he terms 'Modern Gothic', which shows ... greater originality, and uses the Gothic leaf in a delightful manner'.<sup>76</sup>

Kellock discussed windows for St Giles' Murrumbidgee with Williams saying,

There is nothing pictorial about them, but ... examples of designs in lead, glass with paint as a relief. They will be the most 'modern' - windows in Melbourne, and ... will fit into your architecture, and not try to jump out of it as so many windows do ... St Paul's ... are in a Transitional style, neither 'Modern' Gothic nor Victorian Pictorial Realism ... the Murrumbidgee windows ... are far better! Stained glass figures should never be fat, but long thin straight lines to conform to the long straight mullions of the architectural style ...<sup>77</sup>

He sought Williams's opinion of these windows.<sup>78</sup> 'My competition design

70 Because of a lack of confidence in the local glass, this firm was requested to supply countless windows for commissions in South Australia, from 1936 to about 1949.

71 The firm supplied four fine windows for St Paul's Euroa. Williams to the Chairman of Vestry, St Paul's Euroa, 19 September 1929 (SLV). See appendix.

72 He studied in Edinburgh and worked at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London before coming to Australia in the 1930s (see appendix). See Peter Timms, *Australian Studio Pottery and China Painting* (Melbourne 1986), p 151. See Brian Thomas & Eileen Richardson [eds], *Directory of Master Glass Painters* (London 1972), p 68. I am extremely grateful to Mrs Gael Ramsay, Curator/Museum School of Mines, Ballarat, for information about Kellock. G Ramsay to author 27 November 1995.

73 Kellock, Art Department, School of Mines, Ballarat, to Williams, 8 April 1947 (SLV). He also had a 'grisaille' type window and small medallion in the same church.

74 Kellock to Williams, 8 April 1947 (SLV).

75 A contemporary of Kellock's commenting on the stained glass window in St Paul's.

76 N M Bunning, 'Artistry in Glass: D T Kellock's Work' *Courier*, Ballarat (17 January 1948), p 6.

77 Kellock to Williams, 22 December 1947 (SLV).

78 Kellock to Williams, 29 February 1948 (SLV).

for the west window, Littlejohn Chapel was accepted some ... time ago, so things look quite bright ... <sup>79</sup> I notice your name in the papers when new church buildings are concerned. What will you do when more permits are issued. 'Work all night? as well as day.'<sup>80</sup>

During completion of Geelong Grammar school chapel, Kellock said, 'I am going to make the windows look like figured 'grisaille', similar to the 'Liverpool Cathedral' windows and am using glass in the manner of early grained glass with facets of light toned glass running through, and am thinking in terms of pattern and colour instead of s'.<sup>81</sup> Kellock's article, gives insight into his artistic philosophy.

Appreciation is not a mere matter of caprice; we must not be satisfied by.' This pleases me, 'That does not' ... we may learn to feel more widely and to ... find pleasure in qualities which at first were not apparent. Even as artists we should understand and practise appreciation, for a sympathy with others is of value in completing and enriching our own work. We are not only artists, we are also human beings ... Unless art is of some use to humanity and makes life better and richer, humanity will pass it by ... Under all forms of art, there lies a common principle. The human mind is capable of ... a scientific or intellectual form ... an emotional or imaginative form ... It is this touch of emotion and imagination which is the essence of art.<sup>82</sup>

For the Australian Naval War Memorial chapel, Flinders, both Waller and Kellock were considered. Williams said, Waller's strong point 'is strength of design and Kellock's a sensitive appreciation of the quality of the glass'.<sup>83</sup> Both were brilliant craftsmen, thoroughly versed in Christian art. It is highly probable that Williams was seeking the same degree of religiosity and sensitivity with which Christian Waller imbued her stained glass; notably in those she had made for his churches, and which he now aspired to replicate.

Kellock was chosen and Commodore Buchanan enclosed a list of fifty-four windows to be filled with stained glass, saying 'We have seen your work at Geelong Grammar Chapel, and I was particularly impressed with the west window ... as this is a Naval Chapel, you will appreciate ... that windows and furnishing ... should ... express close contact with the sea, and, in particular, the Navy ...' adding that Williams's detailed drawings would be available for him, 'when you come to see us'.<sup>84</sup> Kellock was advised to proceed with an overall plan.<sup>85</sup> Williams instructed him to prepare designs for a comprehensive scheme.<sup>86</sup>

79 This reference to the Littlejohn Chapel confirms that other architects were also using the same artists. Kellock supplied glass to Melbourne Boys Grammar School.

80 Kellock to Williams, 29 February 1948 (SLV). During the war years building was restricted, and permits had to be issued for new buildings and additions to others.

81 Kellock to Williams, 29 February 1948 (SLV). Andrew Chirnside donated the window.

82 Taylor-Kellock, 'The Appreciation of Art', *S.M.B. Students' Magazine* (1946), p 19.

83 Williams to Commodore H J Buchanan, DSO, R A N. 12 July 1950; 18 July 1950 (SLV).

84 Buchanan to Kellock, 4 August 1950 (SLV). The Commodore arranged Kellock's overnight accommodation, and informal discussions with the officers.

85 Buchanan to Kellock, 4 October 1950 (SLV).

86 Williams to Kellock, 16 April 1952 (SLV). These comprised the main west window two rose windows, one over the altar, one in the nave and fifty other windows in the nave and sanctuary. He was to make templates and double check every opening to be filled with stained glass, and be sure not to damage the pressed cement tracery work.

Kellock embodied association with the Navy and sea, and after preparing a written description of the proposed windows sought Williams's guidance for placement.<sup>87</sup> He was advised that the colour and tone of his glass should integrate with the interior, which would be a warm buff or cream, and form a compatible whole with the building, culminating at the altar end. The designs he submitted to the committee required a few minor alterations.<sup>88</sup> Williams suggested an angel figure for the little narrow window on either side of the high altar in the recessed bay.<sup>89</sup> 79-83

When executing the side chapel windows, Williams informed him his stained glass would be alongside the existing windows of the old drill hall and to exercise the greatest care 'to ensure that the colour of the glass blends in completely with the memorial glass of the old windows. Avoid a staccato note of difference'.<sup>90</sup> 'The Last Supper' window required reshaping at the top and built up to fit the new tracery window in the side chapel.<sup>91</sup> He studied the existing glass, noted Williams's instructions,<sup>92</sup> and with the commodore's permission, these were transferred to the new chapel.<sup>93</sup> His work differed considerably from the older glass, which has traditional painted architectural tracery or tabernacle work around the windows, whereas he preferred a more modern approach with rejection of pictorial realism in his treatment of glass composition.

Kellock was advised to bear in mind that his glass 'will all need to be most thoroughly pointed up, as the weather drive there is very strong'.<sup>94</sup> The artist had redesigned the Coral Sea windows, and wondered if the vents could be disposed with, as he needed all the space for the lettering.<sup>95</sup> He said before he completed drawing the side lights of the west window, he had requested Chaplain Fawell for photos of the correct naval dress.<sup>96</sup> The stained glass Kellock made for St Mark's chapel, honouring RAN crews and ships lost in action, was among his most outstanding achievements.<sup>97</sup>

He made seventeen stained glass windows for St John's Camberwell,<sup>98</sup> and some for the chapel, St Andrew's, Brighton.<sup>99</sup> Williams informed him that 23

87 Williams to Commodore Buchanan, 9 August 1950 (SLV).

88 Minutes of meeting of the Memorial Chapel Committee, Tuesday, 21 August 1951.

89 Williams to Kellock, 24 March 1952 (SLV).

90 Williams to Kellock, 3 July 1951 (SLV).

91 This remodelling work was carried out by Alan Sumner at his studio in Wellington St Collingwood, Williams stressing that 'such work to be in harmony with the rest of the window'. Williams to Reverend Herbert Fawell, Senior Chaplain, R A N, 7 September 1953. The relative information was also relayed to Sumner (SLV).

92 Kellock to Williams, 16 January 1952 (SLV).

93 Commodore J C Morrow, D S C, D S O, R A N to Williams, 19 August 1953 (SLV).

94 Williams to Kellock, 7 September 1953 (SLV).

95 Kellock to Williams, 22 September 1953 (SLV).

96 Kellock to Williams, 10 January 1954 (SLV).

97 See appendix for list of windows.

98 These were made during the thirteen years 1957-70. (See appendix).

99 Williams to Kellock, 15 June 1962; 13 August 1962 (SLV). He requested wire guards on the outside, 'the lower portion screening the hinged awning-wise opening windows to be so arranged that it will move outwards when the opening window reaches it'.

his windows 'have stood up splendidly to the storms at the weekend - no leaks whatsoever'. The artist inquired what the Archdeacon thought of his abstract design of the windows for St Andrew's, also saying he had sent a symbolic grisaille type window to Williams's St Stephen's, Adamstown.<sup>100</sup>

Williams built up a good rapport with his craftsmen, because he was aware of the ability of the actual artist, who did the work with his own hands. Kellock thanked him for the opportunity of working with him.<sup>101</sup> Christian Waller accepted a price lower than usual because, as she said, 'I get so much pleasure working for Mr Williams's churches, that I like to do them if I possibly can',<sup>102</sup> and most of Napier Waller's windows were for Anglican churches, the majority designed by Williams.

The local artists had the advantage of being on the spot and able to cope with the light intensities found in our country and manipulate the glass accordingly, and so it was not long before Australian artists produced glass which not only rivalled that imported from overseas, but was less expensive.

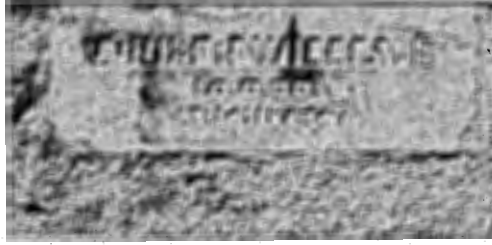
---

100 Kellock to Williams, 18 December 1963 (SLV).

101 Kellock to Williams, 17 October 1953; Williams to Kellock 23 October 1953 (SLV).

102 Christian Waller to Bishop Wylde in 1934 (SLV).

## CATHEDRALS



Williams was commissioned to work on several cathedrals, the east end and Warriors' chapel of All Saints' Bathurst, NSW and completion of St James' Townsville and Holy Trinity Wangaratta. He designed St Alban the Martyr, Griffith, NSW,<sup>1</sup> which was proclaimed a cathedral in 1984 and became the Cathedral Church of the Diocese of Riverina.<sup>2</sup> The Cathedral Church of St Boniface, Bunbury, Western Australia was built and finished in his lifetime.

Although stone had been preferred for most public buildings and churches, brick was accepted as a building material in ecclesiastical architecture in Australia. In the mid eighteen sixties Joseph Reed was re-introducing brickwork to Melbourne, notably with his Independent church of 1866, whilst Blackett, motivated by his employee Horbury Hunt, was doing likewise in Sydney.<sup>3</sup> Like Hunt, Williams had an extraordinary knowledge of construction, and a love for brickwork, constructing churches of brick in dimensions that had previously been of stone, and was able to demonstrate that local materials could be more elegant than previously envisaged. Bunbury cathedral was built of faced cream brickwork, inside and out.

As diocesan architect to the dioceses of Bathurst<sup>4</sup> and later Grafton.<sup>5</sup> Williams not only built new churches and chapels, but made alterations and additions to existing churches, in various areas of New South Wales. One of his most prestigious commissions was the east end of All Saints' cathedral, Bathurst, - and its impressive Warriors' Chapel, with its superb furnishings.<sup>6</sup> It is situated in the south east angle of the cathedral and, though austere, is rich in subtle

53

- 1 Originally built as a very large church, it now serves its purpose well as a cathedral.
- 2 See 'Historical Development', pp 140-141 for details about this cathedral.
- 3 Freeland, *Architecture in Australia*, 1968, p 145.
- 4 Williams to the Rt Reverend H Crotty, Bishop of Bathurst, 20 September 1934, accepting position as Diocesan architect of Bathurst (SLV).
- 5 Bishop C Storrs, Bishop of Grafton, to Williams, 28 February 1946 (SLV).
- 6 This noble monument, known as the Chapel of St Michael and St George, is the diocesan memorial to the soldiers and sailors of Bathurst, who died in the 1914-18 war. Of interest is the painting of 'The Last Supper', signed 'DDV', Velasquez's usual signature, and dated 1650. It was presented to Bishop Long, who later presented it to the Cathedral, where it has hung above the altar in the Warriors' Chapel since 1927. Information and photos kindly supplied by Barbara Fallow of Bathurst cathedral.

shapes and shadows. Williams designed the Walshaw Memorial Hall,<sup>7</sup> which was incorporated sympathetically into the overall complex of cathedral buildings, and forms the front portion of the Soldiers' Memorial hall.

Because of the pressing need for the Cathedral Hall, it was decided in 1922 to build this first, and to erect the eastern portion of the Cathedral later.<sup>8</sup> Of brick structure,<sup>9</sup> the building designed in the spirit of Gothic, is carried on reinforced concrete beams, with concrete columns connecting the top and bottom beams, and a splendid open timbered ceiling. Above the main entrance to the hall, is a cluster of five windows, with elaborate concrete lintel and projecting canopy-head, surmounted by the diocesan coat of arms in terra cotta.<sup>10</sup>

The east end of All Saints' Cathedral was constructed of local red bricks of a splendid tone and texture, which the architect considered could not be excelled anywhere. Not only was the cost of stone prohibitive, but Williams was quick to realise that the beautiful Bathurst brick would harmonise with the government buildings of excellent architectural design, that face the cathedral across the central square of the city, which is one of the finest civic centres in the Commonwealth.

Externally, the clever massing of the various facades of the cathedral focuses on the central and dominating feature, the tower. The great cross on the eastern gable was blessed and placed in position by Canon Wilson.<sup>11</sup> The eastern wall of the sanctuary was planned to receive a reredos or dossal built in or around, and assimilating with the construction of this wall, bold in upright lines, rising majestically. The north and south walls of the spaciouly planned sanctuary were niched to receive the built-in bishop's chair, sedilia and credence,<sup>12</sup> while the bishop's throne merges with a pier of the south choir arcading. The choir walls, rising with strong vertical lines, are pierced with soaring arches, through which the ambulatory is visible. The cenotaph in the south ambulatory was built of Hawkesbury stone and recessed at the top to receive the Book of Remembrance.<sup>13</sup>

The choir and ambulatory arches are fitted with parclose screens designed to blend in with the surroundings. At the crossing a series of piers and arches lead up to the vault under the tower, and other arches north and south denote entry to the transepts. Aisles and nave arcading lead to the narthex, where the inner wall of the western porch encompasses the baptistry. The lines of the interior of the cathedral are designed to focus on the east end, culminating in the high

7 It was donated by Mrs W H Walshaw of Yeltholme, in memory of her late husband. Yeltholme is a small farming settlement about 15 km east of Bathurst.

8 Carol J Churches to author, 12 February 1995; and 5 March 1995. I am extremely grateful to Carol Churches, who has been most helpful in answering queries and supplying me with information concerning the church and Hall,

9 Built of Bathurst bricks, it is now called the Soldiers Memorial Hall. It has a high pitched roof, featuring a gable hood similar to that used on All Saints' church, Emu.

10 This was made to Williams's design by the Eureka Terra Cotta Tile Company.

11 Canon Wilton risked life and limb to install the cross himself in memory of his mother.

12 Conversation with Williams.

13 Containing the names of the soldiers of the Diocese who died in war.



altar, and the window above.<sup>14</sup> There is an atmosphere of serenity, with restful lighting, filtering through the clerestory windows and outer ambulatory wall.

Testimony of the architect's skill and sensitivity, is apparent in the imposing high altar, splendid arches, elegant columns and brilliant stained glass.<sup>15</sup> Williams used timberwork beautifully, seen in the fine parclose screens of wood, and the parquetry wooden floor ascending from choir to altar footpace.<sup>16</sup> He was a very original designer, and has accomplished dignity and beauty on a vast scale, embodying elegance and spirituality - hallmarks of his style.

53-4

He was advisory architect to the chapter of the Goulburn Cathedral, and in 1924 was commissioned to supply the specifications and working drawings for the tower and spire of St Saviour's Cathedral, carrying forward E T Blacket's original designs of 1884. He prepared plans for underpinning the east end of the sanctuary and was instructed to work in conjunction with Sir Charles Rosenthal as local supervising architect. This work did not go forward because of lack of funds, until the late 1980s, when the architects Freeman & Associates, Canberra brought this project to completion, making use of Williams's plans.<sup>17</sup>

55(a)

In 1932 All Saints' Pro-cathedral, Bendigo, was proclaimed a cathedral (although it no longer is). Williams and Gawler & Drummond, architects in association, planned another new building to be built as funds became available. It was an imposing design in brick faced with stone, a Gothic cathedral surmounted by a central tower.<sup>18</sup> The first portion, involving alterations and additions to the choir and sanctuary were built, and a new altar installed, but the building did not proceed further due to a shortage of funds.<sup>19</sup>

55(b)

St James's Cathedral, Townsville, originally designed by Edmund Blacket was built as far as the transepts. But Morton Herman in *The Blackets* questions the authenticity of the claim by the Blacket brothers saying they 'have stretched the truth slightly'. The design was probably instigated by Blacket, but as the foundation stone was not laid until about five years after his death the plans

14 Depicting Christ in Glory.

15 Montgomery, working in close consultation with the architect and Bishop Long, designed the beautiful windows in the sanctuary, chapel and ambulatory (SLV).

16 The Parquetry Floor Company, Sydney, built the floor. Foy & Gibson (Melbourne retailers) made the joinery in their furniture workshops. Reding did the carving and William Mark made the processional cross, chalice and paten, the gold, enamel and jewel work for the Book of Remembrance. Williams instructed Mark to make a sanctuary lamp similar to his Goulburn cathedral lamp, a tabernacle as in St Peter's Eastern Hill, and a silver crucifix. Bishop A L Wylde to Williams, 10 June 1949 (SLV).

17 These architects engaged the author to research Williams's correspondence, specifications and plans held in the SLV. This information, including the engineers' report, and slides made of Williams's plans and working drawings, processed by the SLV, were duly passed on to the architects responsible for completion of the cathedral.

18 The excellent perspective was executed by Roy Simpson AO, who trained in Williams's office. Simpson was awarded the RAIA Gold medal in 1997.

19 Williams to the Rt Reverend Bishop of Bendigo, Dr Donald Baker, 22 February 1936. Montgomery had made the stained glass west window and those on both sides of the church. Williams recommended Napier Waller for the three stained glass memorial windows in the east end, saying 'what strength and freshness there is in his work'.

could have been tampered with.<sup>20</sup> In 1883 it was decided 'to initiate ... raising the ... funds for the erection of a Cathedral Church'.<sup>21</sup> Arthur Blacket, a son of the famous Edmund Blacket was chosen, the *Townsville Herald* reported

Mr Arthur Blacket of Sydney paid a visit to Townsville in 1885, inspected the ... site and examined the materials ... to be used ... He supplied two designs, one in Gothic ... and the other in a Semi-Norman style of cruciform plan with a tower at the west (and) with certain modifications the latter design was accepted ... Blacket's dismissal from the project almost happened, saved only by the the production of yet another set of drawings ... The grand vision was gone.<sup>22</sup>

In March 1890 it was recorded 'That the Bishop during his stay in Sydney, be desired to interview Mr Blacket and that this meeting empowers his Lordship, if advisable, to dispose with[sic] Mr Blacket's services.'<sup>23</sup>

The dissatisfaction with the original 1887 portion may have been the reason the cathedral chapter decided in 1955 to have a completely new design for the west end, and appointed Williams. Bishop Ian Shevill is reputed to have asked on the evening of his enthronement 'How much will it cost to finish the building? He was told £50,000 and answered 'we must get it'.<sup>24</sup>

Although following on in Blacket's tradition, and using local bricks to match the built portion, Williams adapted his design to suit current day requirements.<sup>25</sup> Because of the considerable slope of the land, he utilised the steep bank to advantage, to create a dramatically sited cathedral at the west end, approached by a long wide flight of steps, leading up to a ceremonial terrace in front of the lofty and deeply recessed porch. Added to this impressive western facade is the massive bell shaft, surmounted by a stainless steel cross.

55(c)

He extended the side windows in the nave right down to floor level, filling the lower portion with protective openable grilles.<sup>26</sup> The arched western end canopies the cross, and as the nave floor was well above ground level over the platform at the west, vestries were accommodated in the space below. The arms of the diocese grace the great west doors. Sheathed in copper, they represent the great mineral wealth and the people who mine it in North Queensland.<sup>27</sup> The bishop's throne, canons' stalls and screens were dedicated to the memory of Bishop J O Feetham, the fourth bishop of the diocese.<sup>28</sup>

55(d)

20 Morton Herman, *The Blackets*, 1977 [1963] p 200.

21 Minutes of meeting 5 August 1883. I am grateful to Peter Newell for his efforts in providing and securing information for me concerning this cathedral. Also Mrs Maureen Olditch, Diocesan Secretary, Townsville, who supplied me with valuable material, and the booklet *Saint James' Cathedral, A Portfolio of Drawings, Photographs and Notes on the occasion of the Consecration of the Cathedral*, 24 June 1978. Townsville.

22 *Townsville Herald* (24 December 1887).

23 Minutes of meeting of Cathedral Committee, 5 March 1890. Bishop Stanton was the prelate. The incomplete cathedral remained unfinished through two world wars.

24 The Synod authorised the appeal to rebuild St Anne's school, now the Cathedral School, and complete the cathedral. See footnote 21.

25 Conversation with Williams. In 1959 the contract was let to complete the building.

26 These could be closed in winter.

27 *A Tour of St James' Cathedral, Townsville, North Queensland*.

28 These furnishings designed by Williams were carved by Wally Langcake of Melbourne.

Brian McCarthy recalled that when timber for the choir stalls was required, it was rather opportune that a cedar tree was creating a traffic hazard almost in the centre of a busy intersection. The very astute mayor, forestalled criticism, by announcing that if the timber could be used in a right and proper way, permission would be granted for the tree to be cut down. The choir stalls met this requirement.<sup>29</sup> One wonders if a chance remark in the right quarters by the architect himself, may not have provided divine intervention.

Williams was not responsible for the statues at the east end, that are grouped about the figure of the Risen Lord, which is out of scale and proportion.<sup>30</sup> Newell & partners<sup>31</sup> ultimately brought to completion Williams's design.

55(e)

Williams was appointed by the Cathedral Council for the completion of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Wangaratta, designed by Walter Butler in 1908.<sup>32</sup> He told the bishop of Wangaratta 'I wish to respect the quality and nature of Mr Butler's design in so far as is compatible with present day requirements of the site, costs and materials and methods of construction'.<sup>33</sup> The east end portion comprising the sanctuary, choir, lady chapel, vestries and part of the nave was already built,<sup>34</sup> but Williams was commissioned to prepare an entirely new design for the ecclesiastical west end. A tower had been included in the design, but was not built. It is worth noting that the west end of Butler's design had never received majority approval. As far back as 1909 Bishop Armstrong, writing in his diocesan paper, predicted that there would be a re-designing.<sup>35</sup> Williams studied Butler's plans, 'Your uncle's drawings of the cathedral loaned to me ... have been carefully studied and duly returned to the Cathedral Authorities...' <sup>36</sup>

56

Designed in the Gothic mode, Williams added a western porch, spacious narthex, baptistry apse, tower and ceremonial terrace, three extra bays to the nave and aisles, and raised the height of the existing nave walls. He designed a completely new steeply pitched roof, supported on elegant steel trusses, deeply anchored in the buttress sections of the wall, extending over the old and new portion of the nave. Moreover he used terra cotta shingle tiles to great effect. For the building work Joseph Smith was co-opted as architect in conjunction.<sup>37</sup>

The quarry close to the nearby hills had to be re-opened to mine the Warby granite, a pinkish grey coloured stone, in order to match the existing built

29 The North Queensland Sawmills cut down the tree, sawed it into flitches, kiln dried it, and sent it by ship, entirely free of charge, arranging transport to McCarthy's Melbourne factory, where the choir stalls were made. Conversation with McCarthy.

30 Conversation with Williams. The statues represent the industries and activities of North Queensland, gathered about the figure of Christ. Among the figures depicted are a miner, a canecutter, a stockman, and a university lecturer, together with a boy and girl from the Church Schools, *Northern Churchman* (December 1962).

31 Lund, Hutton, Newell, Queensland. Williams in later years referred some of his Queensland clients to Newell, whose firm was also responsible for completing St Andrew's, Lutwyche, to Williams's original design.

32 It was erected in two stages, 1908 and 1922.

33 Information on LRW files (SLV).

34 *Wangaratta Chronicle* (7 June 1924).

35 Conversation with Williams.

36 Williams to John H Butler, architect, Mount Eliza, 13 October 1960 (SLV).

37 Conversation with Williams. The west end was commenced in 1961.

portion. Considerable difficulty was experienced by the contractors with the irascible quarry lessee, whom it is claimed, threatened to blow up the quarry.<sup>38</sup> Standard Quarries, Footscray, the firm responsible for mining the stone, shaping and delivery on the building site, was frequently refused entry to the quarry. The firm outlined the progress of the work to date, adding

We are also working on the east gable arch and the baptistry gable, one stone springer is completed ... these stones take a mason one week to work. At present, we have seven masons in our employ of whom six are continually working on Wangaratta Cathedral and also two of our cutting machines and frame saws. This will give some indication of our endeavour to complete this job with all possible haste. In your design of the church, the intricate splays, mouldings, etc. that you have designed, are a good deal heavier than existing and therefore a lot of extra work is involved which takes a good deal longer to do ...<sup>39</sup>

Where curved stone was required the mason cut the stone to full sized pattern.<sup>40</sup> Wilkinson continued to disrupt the task of quarrying the stone.<sup>41</sup>

In order to replicate the colour of the tracery in the existing nave windows of 1908, it was necessary to create synthetic stone to match the older windows. Mortley<sup>42</sup> recalled working on this commission. In matching up the tracery, corbels and other trimmings, coloured sand had to be used, together with fine crushed granite and quartz until a suitable match was obtained. Whenever repetitive shapes were needed, templates were cut to match the design, then a model was made in clay or wood and a reinforced cement mould would be taken from this model and cured. When ready, a mixture of coloured sand, cement, fine stone grit, fine crushed granite and quartz, only damp enough for the mix to set properly, would be pressed into the mould and carefully cured.<sup>43</sup>

Nevertheless, some of the work had to be done on the site, such as making heavy columns, which could be easily damaged in transport. These were sometimes cured, pressed and manufactured in situ, or alternately transported on thick beds of damp sand, which cushioned any vibration.<sup>44</sup>

38 Conversation with B Johnson (L Williams & Partners), who was involved on this commission.

39 Standard Quarries Pty Ltd, to Williams, 7 June 1963 (SLV).

40 Conversation with Williams.

41 At one stage the Lands & Survey Department, Melbourne, gave the cathedral authorities right of entry to the quarry to gain the stone and stated that the work would proceed 'with or without Wilkinson'. A two year long delay in the finishing time, necessitated arbitration. The dispute was eventually resolved and an award made to the building contractor by the arbitrators, 'solely on the ground of the slow delivery of stone' (SLV).

42 He worked for Picton Hopkins and carried out countless commissions for Williams.

43 Conversation with Jack Mortley and Mrs Ross Hopkins of Picton Hopkins & Son. These pressed cement items were obviously cheaper than individually carved objects.

44 Conversation with Mortley. The leaflike tracery of precast cement in the western window was also executed by Picton Hopkins.

The interior of the cathedral was finished with various types of bricks.<sup>45</sup> Williams would have agreed with Ruskin who said 'in the use of brick since that is known to be originally moulded, there is no reason why it should not be moulded into diverse forms. It will never be supposed to have been cut, and, therefore, will cause no deception, it will have only the credit it deserves'.<sup>46</sup>

56

There were pages of moulded bricks ordered, which also included ovolo, voussoirs, hood mould, circular on elevation (for arch) &c.<sup>47</sup> Williams's imaginative brickwork, is seen in this cathedral. He used twelve various shaped bricks with a further seven slight variations to these bricks, for use in arches, window surrounds, doorways, plinths, piers, buttresses, sills, screens, wall capping, corbelling &c. His specifications would always list the various shaped bricks required, indicating where each would be located, and the number of every moulded brick necessary for the job in hand.<sup>48</sup>

He often used squints to form deep 45° reveals at doorways or large windows, and above the west main door, and voussoirs in arches over windows and doorways. He was not only adept in designing brickwork, but practical as well, proving this on one particular occasion, during inspection of his buildings. He was approached by a bricklayer on site, who, when confronted with a complicated brick archway over the main doorway, declared it could not be built. Williams took off his coat, handed it to his assistant, rolled up his sleeves and demonstrated with ease, just how the bricks were to be laid.<sup>49</sup>

He, always designed his furniture and fittings with the unity of the complete church in mind, and would concur with J L Pearson, whose aim was to 'make the church look as well as possible and that the several things in it should bear a proportion to it and to one another and to appear to be designed for the positions they are severally placed in'.<sup>50</sup>

45 Williams had numerous shapes made by the Northcote Brick Company. Some of the moulded bricks ordered by him for this cathedral included

small bullnose on end (pattern 15)  
bullnose on flat (pattern 22)  
squint (similar to pattern 11A)  
chamfered on end (pattern 5)  
chamfered base course header (pattern 1)  
returned chamfered base course header (pattern 1)  
scotia on flat (pattern 12) ...'

46 John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps*, p 55.

47 LRW files, 7 October 1960 (SLV).

48 For example

bull nose on flat to sills of all clerestory windows  
special ovolo to sills of all four windows of aisles  
small bull nose to all four arrises of piers of archway to baptistry  
squints to one arris of each window in east porch.  
scotia on flat and ovolo to string mould between apex of nave arcading and clerestory window, &c.

49 Conversation with Hugh Moore, who worked for Williams during his apprenticeship.

50 A Quiney, *John Loughborough Pearson*, Newhaven, (Connecticut 1979), p 59.

When designing the memorial screen for the organ chamber and the lectern at Wangaratta, Williams explained -

#### screen

The design ... is in pleasing proportion and would ... overcome what at present is unsatisfactory in the cathedral, namely an organ too small in size and not in proportion with the fine archway of the organ chamber. The design is ... in good proportion and presents a pleasing rhythm of line, whilst at the same time due recognition is given to the fact that it is an organ screen, in that the central range of pipes are revealed as an integral part of the design. As regards the cresting you will note that a figure is indicated in the centre, but though my drawing of it may have caused it to look more like Moses with the tablets of stone, the intention is that it should be St Cecilia. I rather like the effect of a figure here, but if it is not approved then it can be deleted.<sup>51</sup>

#### lectern

This drawing largely explains itself, the height of the floor of the lectern I have made 12" (360 mm) higher than the present wood platform, for ... such could be better for the Cathedral when completed and too, it enables the line of the top of the low wall of the choir to be continued as a binding line and an integral feature in the design. The height and slope of the bookrest is set out the same as existing, the raised margin at the lower edge of the book rest is about 3" (75 mm) and I would suggest that it might have attached to it on the bible side swivel pieces of light wood, that could be raised when the bible is closed, so that the bible cover would be prevented from skewing out of shape as it does at present. In the front of the lectern I have suggested a panel in mosaic depicting an eagle.<sup>52</sup>

The interior of Holy Trinity cathedral, is finished with red brick patterned with black bricks,<sup>53</sup> and the ceiling lining with anodised aluminium acoustic golden toned tiles, padded in 'Insulwool' (mineral wool). A long vertical window in the apsidal baptistry, flanked by small high windows, is very effective.<sup>54</sup> The very low entrance doorway gives accent to the elevation of the nave, which is, fifteen metres at its highest central part, creating a feeling of majesty and uplift. The building up of the western gables, surmounted by stone crosses adds significantly to the exterior perspective, while the entire work illustrates an impressive massing of architectural shapes.<sup>55</sup> Archbishop Michael Ramsey, dedicated and opened the completed cathedral.<sup>56</sup> As part of the liturgy the Archbishop knocked the traditional three times on the great west door, and

56

- 51 Williams to Canon Percy Dicker, 17 July 1947. J S Brown carved the cresting, and Lenegan carved the delicate figure of St Cecilia (SLV).
- 52 Williams to Dicker, 17 July 1947; 8 August 1950. Williams to Swain & Son, 8 August 1950; Williams to Waller, 8 August 1950; Waller to Williams, 26 August 1950 (SLV).
- 53 The specification for the bricklayer states 'the patterning of the north and south sides of nave, as well as the aisles with black headed bricks, is to match existing. No black bricks are required in the internal faces of baptistry ... 'Tuck pointing: 'Skilfully and neatly tuck point all joints with black tuck pointing to match existing in all respects ...' Walling 'Lay all bricks with frog uppermost, except where the upper damp course is to be laid and carry walling to the heights and thicknesses shown, and build hollow walls with cavities as shown on drawings and detailed...'&c. (SLV).
- 54 The leaf-like tracery in the west window is a familiar motif used by Williams, as seen at St Boniface's cathedral, Bunbury, St Andrew's, Brighton and St John's, Camberwell.
- 55 Conversation with Williams; See also *Australian Builder* (April 1965), p 258.
- 56 *The Anglican* (24 September 1964); *Chronicle Dispatch*, (19 March 1965).



befitting the occasion, Louis Williams on the inside unlocked the door for the ceremonial entrance of his Grace.<sup>57</sup>

Williams was for many years cathedral architect for St Paul's cathedral, Melbourne, designed by the eminent English architect William Butterfield.<sup>58</sup> He argued that the 'glazed tiled dado was not Butterfield's selection, as well as some of the high up details, which were possibly not by his hand'.<sup>59</sup> The dado of plain tiles planned by him for the lower walls was to have been tasteful, but in place of his masterly abstract patterning the green and orange tile dado actually executed was too obtrusive. A section of the tile work was removed during 1917, and replaced by a banded stone dado, adding to the controversy. Williams recommended that such work should never again be attempted, and<sup>60</sup> was conscious of his responsibility in such an important cathedral.<sup>61</sup>

St Alban the Martyr, Griffith, though not originally built as a cathedral, serves the purpose well.<sup>62</sup> Described as '20th century Gothic',<sup>63</sup> it is typical of his particular mode of church architecture, with its high gabled roof, wide eaves, and prominent square belfried corner tower with a copper roof. The main doorway, dominated by a deep recessed arch, opens out on to an impressive terrace. An unusual feature is the simple horizontal form of the vestry wing contrasting with and accentuating the height of the church.<sup>64</sup>

Built of Sydney mid-brown face bricks, it is lined internally with cream bricks with pinkish fleckings.<sup>65</sup> The fairly complicated massing at the west end is intriguing, but not as pleasing as the east end where simple setbacks in the brick face give a subtle and light accentuation of the height, and emphasises the verticality. The aisles are spatially interesting. The eye is drawn towards the nave by the sloping arches, and the low ceiling in the aisles accentuates the height of the nave. The unequal spacing of the trusses, reflected in the buttresses inside adds to the interest. The clerestory windows are alternatively

57 Information from Dr Colin Holden.

58 As early as 1917 North & Williams (partners till c1920) were involved with work at St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne (SLV).

59 LRW, 'Church Architecture' p 185.

60 Correspondence between Williams and the Archbishop and Chapter, St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, 3 March 1917 (SLV).

61 He planned and supervised new furnishings, refurbishments, and designed memorials of varying importance and diverse materials. His Gothic telescopic carved blackwood font canopy was much admired. He was responsible for protecting the cathedral and its appointments from possible air raids during World War II. He implemented liturgical changes.

62 A myth still persists that Archdeacon Twigg, rector, after visiting England, was so impressed by St Alban's Abbey/Cathedral (largely built during the Norman period), that he requested that St Alban's be designed in the Norman style. But as Johnson says, it is pure Williams, who was using the circular form in the twenties at St Ambrose, Gilgandra. The segmental arches are higher than usual, closer to the circular arches of the Abbey. But a segmental arch is quite different from a circular arch. He might have thrown in the semicircular bottom members of the trusses and a rose window to give some Norman feeling to appease Archdeacon Twigg, but in detail they bear no resemblance to St Alban's Abbey or Norman architecture. Conversation with Johnson.

63 Williams to the editor, *Anglican*, 19 March 1954 (SLV).

64 Conversation with Johnson, who kindly supplied many photographs.

65 Williams was disappointed with the colour, because at that time, plain cream bricks in New South Wales were unavailable. Conversation with Johnson.

singles and pairs (three narrower windows at the crossing) and the aisle windows alternatively single and triple.<sup>66</sup> The carved panel of a child on the font was executed by Ola Cohn.<sup>67</sup>

57

Van Pelt in *Essentials of Composition*, believes

that the architect who has a place of worship to build must imbue himself with the thought and feeling of the worshippers ... In spirit he must be a pantheist when asked for a temple, a ritualist when asked for a cathedral.<sup>68</sup>

Williams was a ritualist and admirably met the challenge of a bold design for the War Memorial Cathedral Church of St Boniface, Bunbury, which highlights his clever use of brickwork on a grand scale. Bishop Hawkins told Williams that his building committee had returned from a visit to the newer churches in Perth, and had the unanimous conviction 'that the mind which was responsible for the Wembley church is the mind they desire to function in the matter of their cathedral ... My Committee is united in their desire that you plan our new cathedral'.<sup>69</sup> Williams replied

58

I never desire to intrude into the architectural practice of another State, but only undertake the work in other States when specifically commissioned...I thank you and your Committee for entrusting to me the designing of this important project.<sup>70</sup>

Brend Tor was chosen as a splendidly appealing and dramatic site on which to build the cathedral. Williams stressed that it would dominate and be unobstructed and expensive to build upon, owing to the eastern plunge over the existing walls along the northern slope. But there would be the gain of the various rooms in the crypt. St Paul's location was considered, but dismissed.<sup>71</sup> Moreover, as the architect explained that to build foundations near the surface would not be a satisfactory system, as churches have such varied loadings.

A church is not a box-like construction with reasonably even loadings. The differential loadings of a church are most marked and your proposed Cathedral design is no exception ... My mind and heart go back to Brend Tor, and ... hope that some of the difficulties owing to the location of this site in Bunbury may not ... eventuate. For the nave I have envisaged using a steel portal frame construction ... taking advantage of present day materials ... (being) more economical than all solid brick.<sup>72</sup>

The cathedral is given extra height at the east end as it 'plunges'<sup>73</sup> through the sloping side on to a level base of sand, which forms the semi-circular walled terrace.<sup>74</sup> Although the Bible cautions us against building on sand, and advises

58

66 Conversation with Johnson.

67 Williams engaged the Melbourne sculptress to work on this font of Gosford sandstone.

68 John V Van Pelt *Essentials of Composition as Applied to Art*, New York 1930, p 208.

69 Bishop R G Hawkins, to Williams, 8 April 1959 (SLV). This commission was not open to competition, as few contemporaries possessed his expertise in ecclesiastical design.

70 Williams to Bishop Hawkins, 13 April 1959 (SLV).

71 Bishop Hawkins to Williams, 20 July 1959 (SLV). St Boniface replaced St Paul's Pro-Cathedral in town and St David's in the suburbs. Conversation with Jim Cuniffe.

72 Williams to Bishop Hawkins, 29 May 1959, 8 August 1959 (SLV).

73 Williams's words.

74 The area beneath the terrace accommodates the chapter room, vestries, cloak rooms, &c.

the wise man to build his house on rock,<sup>75</sup> Williams assured the authorities that the sand would not ooze away from the footings, and that the cathedral was securely anchored on a solid base.<sup>76</sup>

An unusual feature is the placing of the huge tower at the east end crowning the sanctuary. Williams brought it forward to give added height, and take advantage of its commanding position on a hill overlooking the town and harbour of Bunbury.<sup>77</sup> The tower, with a cross in the arched recess, has sculptural solidity, while the vertical lines on the apsidal ends of the chapels of St David and St Paul and the bishop's vestry, have a certain elegance about them. The tower, which houses the bell from the old Bunbury cathedral, is of load-bearing brickwork, whereas steel portal framework was used in the nave. By omitting a large east window, Williams cut down glare,<sup>78</sup> and designed a mural cross in timber, pending the future Venetian mural mosaic for the wall.<sup>79</sup> He submitted two names to the Canon as candidates for executing this mural.<sup>80</sup> Robert Blatchford of Perth<sup>81</sup> was supervising architect.

58

Bishop Hawkins was keen to have the glass to the nave and chapel walls of a tone which would preclude the bright and hot summer of Western Australian sunlight from making the interior too bright or uncomfortably hot. Williams met this requirement, but surmised 'that the somewhat disturbing yellowish golden amber tint, which so many Roman Catholic churches were rather fond of, and, alas, in many of our own churches, should be avoided'. Instead he requested that the 'new' antique glass, not just rolled cathedral glass be employed.<sup>82</sup> Plate glass leaded for the bishop's room took advantage of the splendid view.

Some stones of historical importance were incorporated, and built into the

75 Matthew 7:24-26 [*The sermon on the mount*]s

76 Conversation with Williams in 1976 (tapes). Extensive earth works had been carried out and a curved retaining wall of reinforced concrete built around the site, to secure the soil. This was done quite some time before digging the foundations.

77 Conversation with Williams.

78 He devised a scheme for light to filter into the sanctuary by means of vertical strip windows, which avoided glare and any discomfort to the celebrant. The windows were hidden from view in the side walls of a central recess in the east face of the tower. This threw a soft mysterious light onto the sanctuary, which would reflect itself back on to a curved wall, forming a backdrop to the altar.

79 The plaster for the curved sanctuary wall received the same preparation as in St John's Camberwell, and to a special specification. Williams to Blatchford, 2 March 1961.

80 Napier Waller and Len Annois, saying, 'Regarding Waller and his work, he has a world-wide reputation ... His recent most outstanding murals are the mosaics in the National War Memorial at Canberra. In extent these are far greater than the famous mosaics in Santa Sophia ... He is a superb designer and has a most sensitive appreciation of both light and architectural surroundings. With reference to Annois, I am enclosing a cutting of the Melbourne Age, relating to his mural in the Pharmacy College at Parkville ...' Williams to Canon R J Cook, Perth, 4 December 1961 (SLV).

81 He had supervised two of Williams's buildings, St Nicholas's, Floreat Park, and St Edmund's, Wembley, Western Australia, and was appointed supervising architect, and architect in conjunction. Williams to Robert Reid, 12 May 1962 (SLV).

82 Williams to Blatchford, 15 February 1962 (SLV). He also requested the firm send a full range of their coloured glass.

walls of the cathedral as consecration stones.<sup>83</sup> Because of the liturgical trend towards closer clergy/laity relationship, the organ and choir gallery were built over the narthex, allowing the congregation an uninterrupted view of the altar, and improved proximity to the rituals. A niche was provided in the central section of the choir gallery balustrading to receive a 760 mm high statue of St Boniface, while chapel niches accommodate two small statues of St David and Our Lady. Williams employed various means to reduce the temperature.<sup>84</sup>

58

He believed in Pugin's practice of using materials close to hand and selected some of Western Australia's finest timbers. Jarrah was employed for the heavy roof beams, curved skirtings, &c, and dressed blackbutt<sup>85</sup> was used for the parquetry flooring and corridors, and affixed to ceiling timbers to improve acoustics. Blatchford informed Williams that the vermiculite ceiling work was well completed and looks most satisfactory.<sup>86</sup>

Williams would have agreed with Ruskin that 'the first condition which just feeling requires in church furniture is, that it should be simple and unaffected, not fictitious nor tawdry. It may not be in our power to make it beautiful, but let it at least be pure'.<sup>87</sup> Williams's beautiful furniture adequately met this criterion. He designed all the furnishings and fittings, especially the impressive bishop's throne, and the fixture to hold the pastoral staff.<sup>88</sup> The local joiners<sup>89</sup> were given similar instructions, to joiners in other states about treating the timber, which had 'to be of first quality ... hold the full sizes specified, and to be clean, dry, free from sapwood, shakes, large or loose knots and other defects...' <sup>90</sup>

There was discussion as to whether the throne should be executed in Perth or Melbourne.<sup>91</sup> However, Blatchford told Williams that Karl Jager preferred

58

83 A stone was sent from Lincoln Cathedral, England, another from the ancient Canterbury Cathedral, one from the church of Bunbury, Cheshire, and one from the old cathedral of St Paul's in Bunbury, *South Western Times* (11 October 1962).

84 He used pressed cement grilles, protected by doors, to provide a through current of air. In addition, the open cloister on the northern side of the nave kept the building cooler.

85 The 24,000 super ft [57 m<sup>3</sup>] of dressed blackbutt timber supplied by Millars', Bunbury, were in 13 super ft (3.96 m). lengths for the ceiling, but shorter finger jointed lengths were used in the corridors. More than 200 square yards [167 m<sup>3</sup>] of black-butt parquetry cover the cathedral floor. A high mobile scaffold was used to fix the ceiling timbers of 28 ft (8.54 m) and 33 ft (10.06 m) to the nave apex. *South Western Times* (11 October 1962), p 32.

86 Robert Blatchford to Williams 20 June 1962 (SLV) The state's resources were stretched to provide the large quantity of blackbutt necessary for this building. When preparing the jarrah skirting in the curved chapels of St David and St Paul, difficulties occurred, especially in regard to the 100 mm and 200 mm widths, which did not bend when subjected to common heat treatment. The problem of the curved skirtings was solved by a local boat builder, who treated the timber in a special oven plant at his yard.

87 J Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps*, 'The Lamp of Truth'.

88 R G Hawkins, Bishop of Bunbury, to Williams, 1 May 1962, approving all drawings of furniture for the cathedral; Williams to Robert Reid, 23 July 1962. Williams sent a key plan of the furniture location to Blatchford (SLV).

89 The Modern Furnishing Company, Perth, fabricated all the joinery.

90 Specification for joiner, St Boniface cathedral, Western Australia (SLV).

91 This comprised the two small angel figures designed for the front of the prayer desk of the throne, and the carving of the canopy above, which needed expert craftsmanship.

working in jarrah and appeared quite confident of being able to execute the

carving of the angel figures, and the foliated canopy.<sup>92</sup> Williams stressed that 'we don't want a chocolate box, sentimental sort of carving and unless the carver has had experience in figure carving I wouldn't think it wise for him to tackle it ...' <sup>93</sup> After he studied photographs of Jager's work, he was quite satisfied that he should be instructed to execute the carving.<sup>94</sup>

58

However, before the artist started on carving the regimented leaves on the canopy of the throne, Williams sent 'a full size set-out of how these leaves, stalks &c. are arranged. This is something that cannot be left to the individual taste of the carver'.<sup>95</sup> The carved canopy, 'which perhaps may look simple at first glance ... is more complex than appears at first sight'. He explained that it is precision work, and the success of this type of regimented foliage is in the accuracy with which it is carved as indicated by the detail. 'The effectiveness is obtained by the alternating planes of the carved groups of leaves ... Please emphasise that the carver will exercise very great care to assure a faithful following of the various angles, grooves, &c.' Jager carved the coat of arms on the throne, the two angel figures and the foliated canopy to Williams's designs.<sup>96</sup>

The front of the high altar was faced with three symbolic decorative 'Polylite' panels<sup>97</sup> adding interest and colour to the holy table. The central and largest panel carries the chi-rho monogram XP given in the form of a cross, which generally represents Christ. Furthermore, the monogram could be read as the Latin word pax,<sup>98</sup> an appropriate symbol in a War Memorial cathedral. The smaller side panels were decorated with the alpha and omega symbols, representing God the Son.<sup>99</sup> Williams designed these panels made by the artist Reine Slagmolen.<sup>100</sup>

59

A rather unusual request was made for the altar rails, which entailed a sliding rail to go across the opening between the rails. <sup>101</sup> Williams cautioned that for the time being, the gates be lifted at the end when opening and closing in order

92 Blatchford to Williams, 7 August 1962 (SLV).

93 Williams to Blatchford, 9 August 1962 (SLV).

94 Williams to Blatchford, 10 August 1962. Jager also carved the regimented leaves of the pulpit to Williams's designs (SLV).

95 Williams to Blatchford, 21 August 1962 and 3 September 1962 (SLV).

96 Williams to Blatchford, 7, 8 & 10 September, 1962; (SLV) The local furniture firm made an error in the measurements for the canopy and Williams was very annoyed, as he had supplied full sized drawings of the various angles. He suggested a Melbourne craftsman could receive the timber, carve it, and he would arrange to have it sent over to Western Australia priority. The throne, which cost £1,000 in 1962, was much admired for its design and carving, which was duly carried out according to the architect's designs.

97 Made by Vetrart Studios, Melbourne.

98 George Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, London 1980 (1954) p 150.

99 This usage is based upon *Revelation I: v 8*, which reads 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord ...'. Ferguson, p 149.

100 Williams to Vetrart Studios, Melbourne, enclosing drawings of the three panels, 1 June 1962; Williams to Robert Reid, 25 June 1962 (SLV).

101 The request was made by the Church Trustees.

not to cause the weight to drag over the carpet.<sup>102</sup>

A local firm made the stained glass windows,<sup>103</sup> but Williams was unhappy that the window design was prepared in England and executed here, which 'would prove a grave source of danger'. He told the bishop, that it would be far better to have the work executed in England by an artist in stained glass and brought in duty free to Australia which 'would truly be of an artistic nature, and not just some common commercial stained glass work'.<sup>104</sup> The local firm supplied the abstract naïve windows, made of bold patterned non-pictorial new 'antique' coloured glass, embodying about thirty different tones.<sup>105</sup>

Williams preferred to use thick leads and was strongly against thin leads, presumably for architectural solidity - it suited his solid style. He used 16 mm thick vertical leads and 10 mm thick horizontal ones, supporting bold vertical patterns of narrow cathedral glass with narrow red bands.<sup>106</sup> He said that the glass would be better if beaded in with metal beads, instead of putty, saying that metal beads were not specified because they were too costly and that the saddle bars would need to be on the outside where the putty would have been. He said

in order to fix the saddle bars in the inside, it is necessary that the bars at each end should be U-shaped so that they would fit on to the inner steel member of the window. They would be kept in place by the copper wiring to the lead comes, together with the fact that the split or U-shaped end would hold by friction.<sup>107</sup>

There was some drama when Williams learned that the St David window of that chapel was 254 mm too long, which would have meant altering the window sills to accommodate this mistake, saying

60

we cannot let a stained glass window control the aesthetics of the cathedral building, even if it means delay, it must be rectified. The makers of windows must take their own templates and that, always from the finished work.<sup>108</sup>

He had two very experienced stained glass artists in Melbourne, Waller and Taylor-Kellock. The local makers were instructed to prepare miniatures of each

102 Williams to Bishop Hawkins, 7 November 1962. The problem was duly solved and by utilising a certain portion of the existing metal work, with the metal edges rounded and graphite applied to them, any noise or friction of metal grating on metal was avoided. Williams to Robert Reid, 19 December 1962 (SLV).

103 E G Gowers & A S Brown of Greenmount fabricated the windows in collaboration with Carl Edwards of England *The Messenger*, 17, 179 (October 1962).

104 Williams to Bishop Hawkins, 23 November 1961 (SLV).

105 Each window had a different primary colour and two sets of subordinate colours, each window harmonising with another, and creating an impressive effect. A stone cross profiled by the main vertical and horizontal members was formed in each nave window.

106 Conversation with Blyth Johnson.

107 Williams to Blatchford, 16 May 1962 (SLV). This chapter was included in 'stained glass' as it seemed relevant to Williams's overall requirements in fitting some glass.

108 Williams to Blatchford, 8 June 1962 (SLV).



window first. The entire matter was eventually settled amicably.<sup>109</sup>

The large shield containing the coat of arms and the bishop's mitre, placed over the outside gallery at the east end, can be seen from quite a distance.<sup>110</sup> The stained glass in the great west end window<sup>111</sup> depicts St Boniface, and was erected in memory of the Brotherhood of St Boniface, which was formed by Bishop Goldsmith, the first Bishop of the diocese.<sup>112</sup>

A small, but important problem related to the height of the doors at the south-west porch and southern end of the narthex. Very tall bishops, when fully vested, wearing a 380mm mitre, and being preceded by a pastoral staff, had difficulty entering some buildings which had insufficient door heights. The present height of 2.1 m was often inadequate, and too difficult to negotiate comfortably, and a door of at least 2.4 metres high was essential to allow for the bishop's dignified entrance.<sup>113</sup>

A black and white perspective drawing of both the cathedral and the throne, were executed<sup>114</sup> and postcards made for fund raising purposes.<sup>115</sup> Williams explained that the electrical lighting of the cathedral was concerned with keeping glare to a minimum,<sup>116</sup> while the general floodlighting of the tower,

109 Williams to Bishop Hawkins, 12 June 1962 (SLV).

110 Williams to Blatchford, 12 July 1962, enclosing his drawing for this work, which was made of pressed cement.

111 The leaflike tracery of precast cement was executed by Picton Hopkins, Melbourne.

112 *South Western Times* (11 October 1962), p 30. For an excellent account of Frederick Goldsmith, see Colin Holden, *Ritualist on a Tricycle, Frederick Goldsmith* (Nedlands 1997). A number of memorial plaques, attached to the western wall of the cathedral, honour former clergy and servicemen and women of Bunbury, who died in war. Other memorials include the altar in memory of Bishop Wilson, the Bishop's throne honouring Bishop Knight, and the pulpit in memory of Bishop Goldsmith.

113 Blatchford to Williams, 22 June 1962 (SLV).

114 Williams to Blatchford, 23 July 1962 (SLV). Leonard Bullen of Melbourne was a clever architectural artist, specialising in black and white drawings. He made many such perspective drawings for Williams's churches. This architect regularly submitted drawings, usually executed by the same artist, with relative information on new buildings, to the editor of local and interstate newspapers, as well as numerous church publications, in cooperation with church authorities. Vestries invariably requested postcards be run off the perspective block to boost fund raising.

115 R Reid to Williams requesting permission to reproduce the artist's drawing of the bishop's throne in the diocesan papers, 9 August 1962 (SLV).

116 Williams to Robert Reid, 4 July 1961 (SLV). The lighting of the cathedral was applauded for the pleasing harmony of colour, the dark red-brown polished jarrah furniture and fittings being offset by the rich blue and gold carpet, while the walls of cream brick compliment the blond polished blackbutt ceiling. Dignity and reverence have been balanced in lighting with brightness and cheerfulness, creating a parity of the practical with the aesthetic and the dramatic, ensuring with splendour of lighting that the focus is unquestionably the altar. The sanctuary is lit on either side, just behind the arch, with eight fluorescent fittings mounted four on either side of the arch, one above the other. About 4.5 m above floor level, ten special cantilever bracket lights mounted on the wall columns light the nave and chancel, and as these are separately switched the lighting control can be varied.

eastern face, doorways and stairways had been skilfully achieved.<sup>117</sup>

Blatchford told Williams how pleased he was with the cathedral's interior and the overall effect of the brickwork, jarrah furniture, carpets, &c, which 'tones in with the previously over colourful windows to the nave, that cease to be over dominant, and supply a happy richness to the interior and are very good ...'<sup>118</sup>

This building with its brickwork moulded into interesting shapes, is very sculptural in feeling and a distinctive landmark on the hillside of Brend Tor. St Boniface was the first completed Anglican cathedral to be consecrated in Australia this century.<sup>119</sup> Williams always conscious of the significance of ceremony had built a splendid cathedral, embodying spaciousness and grandeur, and light without glare, whilst its striking beauty enriches the skyline.

Few architects are chosen to design a cathedral, and fewer still, to see it to completion. Williams commenced another cathedral and was commissioned to complete two other cathedrals, and imprint his own design on those buildings commenced by eminent nineteenth century architects.

117 At the western end the baptistry is located in front of a brightly coloured stained glass window portraying St Boniface on his journeys, and for the night lighting, two decorative units are fixed level to the choir floor above the font. The narthex is lit by recessed units each fitted with fluorescent tubes and mounted flush in the ceiling. In the Chapel of St David and St Paul the upward lighting has been subdued and a centrally mounted eyeball spotlight fitted in the ceiling to highlight the altar. At the foot of the outside cross recessed into the eastern face of the tower, a spotlight and two projector flood fittings point upwards to give a rising sun effect in the brick recess. *Journal of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria* (1965) *I.E.S. Lighting Review*, (December 1965).

118 Blatchford to Williams, 8 October 1962 (SLV). He added that 'the acoustics both at (Williams's) Floreat Park and, in particular, Bunbury, are extraordinarily good'.

119 *South Western Times* (11 October 1962), p 30.

## THE OXFORD MOVEMENT



Williams firmly believed in the Oxford Movement's influence on ecclesiastical architecture. This was apparent when he was invited to write an article for the *Church Chronicle*,<sup>1</sup> that the editor had stipulated was to be on the architectural 'spirit' of the Oxford Movement, which celebrated its centenary in 1933,<sup>2</sup> and had its commencement in academic circles in Oxford. It was 'a ringing call to churchmen to realize the immediate danger in which the English church stood, and to rally to her aid'.<sup>3</sup> A logical result of the movement of 1833 was the revival of ceremonial in public worship<sup>4</sup> and an organisation 'concerned with the architectural and liturgical transformation of the Church of England'.<sup>5</sup> *Tracts for the Times*, was academic in thrust and dealt primarily with doctrinal issues, though it was not uninterested in liturgy and worship. However, by the 1850s, its ideals were being translated into parish life where they influenced both pastoral delivery (particularly outreach among the poor) and the performance of the liturgy. At this point, its practical application (renewed sacramental life, understood among other things as an encounter with the transcendent) was very well served by the kind of building provided by Gothic revival architects.<sup>6</sup>

1 L R Williams 'The Spirit of its Architecture', *Church Chronicle* [Brisbane Diocese] (May 1933) I am extremely grateful for information from the Reverend Dr John A Moses, formerly a professor at the University of Queensland, and who is editor of *From Oxford to the Bush: Catholic Anglicanism in Australia*, Canberra 1997. He answered many of my queries and sent me some photographs of Williams's churches. Ralph O'Brien has been most helpful and supplied me with valuable information about Anglo-Catholicism, and sent photographs (as executor of the estate of the late Canon Dr Wilhelm Rechnitz, he made possible the publication of *From Oxford to the Bush*, through his implementation of the terms of Dr Rechnitz's will).

2 John Henry Newman always regarded the Oxford Movement's birthday as 4 July 1833, when John Keble preached the Assize Sermon in the University Church of St Mary the Virgin. See S L Ollard, *A Short History of the Oxford Movement* (London 1915), p 3.

3 Ollard, p 4.

4 Ollard, p 152.

5 Nigel Yates, *Buildings, Faith, and Worship. The Liturgical Arrangement of Anglican Churches 1600-1900* (Oxford 1991), p 133. There was fairly general support for some aspects of Tractarian ceremonial: the better outward observance of the liturgical calendar, the decoration of churches at festivals, greater reverence during the services, and above all, a wider variety of music permissible in church, p 140.

6 Conversation with Dr Holden.

The Oxford Tractarians were the link between the old-fashioned high churchmen of the eighteenth century and later Victorian ritualists. The Oxford Movement which had begun as a theological pressure group, later became a movement involved in the architectural and liturgical transformation of the Church of England. Changing theological emphasis created a new understanding of liturgy, which in turn made it desirable to change the interior arrangement of churches. Some innovations that were widely supported, ceased to be matters of controversy, and had become so popular that people had forgotten their Tractarian origin, such as harvest festivals. The Romantic Movement's affinity for the medieval helped to generate the Gothic Revival in architecture. The creation of buildings whose internal layouts favoured a certain style of liturgy (processional, focused on the sanctuary) actually encouraged liturgical change in this direction in the 19th century.<sup>7</sup>

The Ecclesiologists unquestionably brought a new perspective to Anglican church architecture and liturgy, but it took a long time to implement. Ultimately the effect of the Oxford Movement was to upset the liturgical consensus within the Church of England, and finally to replace it with an architectural flavour, which was sometimes at variance with liturgical criteria, but which, nevertheless, remained liturgically based until well after the Second World War.<sup>8</sup>

The Tractarian seed was scattered overseas as well as at home.<sup>9</sup> The ideas of the Oxford movement were transported to Australia by clergymen from England,<sup>10</sup> a typical example of a twentieth century bishop, the Right Reverend Reginald Charles Halse, who was deeply formed by such influences. He began his career as a slum priest in London's East End, then volunteered to serve in the poor and remote parts of the Empire as a Bush Brother. He was appointed Head of the Brotherhood of St Barnabas, in North Queensland, followed later by two episcopates, Riverina and Brisbane. He travelled widely in Australia and was one of the prime movers of a Constitution for the Australian Church, never losing sight of the truly Catholic values that originally inspired the Anglican Catholic revival in Anglicanism.<sup>11</sup> The Oxford Movement had influenced Anglican worship, by encouraging and largely directing 'the bringing into the higher service of God and man, the arts of architecture, of music and of liturgy'.<sup>12</sup>

The Oxford Movement centenary celebrations in Australia demonstrated

7 Information from Dr Holden.

8 N Yates, *Buildings, Faith and Worship*, pp 133-4, 147, 150, 154.

9 C P S Clarke, p 151. The Reverend George A Selwyn, who became bishop of New Zealand in 1841, left England inspired by the ideals and teaching of the Oxford Movement, and came under Tractarian influence.

10 Bishop William Grant Broughton, a high churchman, who was acknowledged for his spiritual leadership in the Colony, was the first and only Anglican Bishop of the whole of Australia. He was fully involved in the lead up to formation of the Diocese of Sydney in 1847. See *Anglicans Celebrate 150 Years. The Sydney Diocese: Fulfilling the Mission of the Church* (Sydney 1997), pp 10-12, 64.

11 Moses, pp 64-8.

12 Moses, p 166.

something of the extent to which the revival had influenced Anglicanism in Australia; by then (1933) it had major strongholds in every capital city, but it had also impacted on many rural dioceses.<sup>13</sup> The religious Order of St Elizabeth of Hungary was imported to Australia and established convents in South Bunbury, Busselton and Margaret River in 1928. The sisters worked as social workers, long before government agencies existed, and concerned themselves with the impoverished and disadvantaged.<sup>14</sup> While some English religious orders came to this country, Australian Anglo-Catholics formed their own religious orders; notably the Bush Brotherhoods, including the Brotherhood of St Boniface in Bunbury, formed in Western Australia by Bishop Frederick Goldsmith,<sup>15</sup> a strong advocate of Anglo-Catholicism, and the first Bishop of the Diocese. Williams designed the Cathedral of St Boniface in Bunbury, which maintains 'high' church influences.<sup>16</sup> It was designed much later than Goldsmith's time - in the diocese's post-war period, and indeed, comparatively late in Williams's own life.<sup>17</sup>

The Community of the Ascension, was a band of men who were in the process of forming a community, and became the first Anglican male religious community to be founded in Australia. Williams built their living quarters and chapel<sup>18</sup> out of the former stables, hay loft and appropriately attached buildings of Old Bishopthorpe<sup>19</sup>, near Goulburn, which had been burnt out some years before. It was offered by the diocese to this band of monks, who were looking for a building of their own. A round window was put in, the floor taken up, large openings pierced in the end wall and arched over, forming an ambulatory, with the massive old timbers from the hay loft

84(a)

13 Moses, p 140. Other orders included the Sisters of the Sacred Advent in Queensland, and the wandering bush Community of the Servants of the Holy Cross.

14 See Merle Bignell, *Little Grey Sparrows* (Nedlands 1992). As the sisters wore a grey habit they were affectionately referred to as 'the little grey sparrows'. I am indebted to the Reverend Dean Llewelyn Jones of St Boniface cathedral, and Jim Cuniffe, senior Lay Canon of St Boniface, for answering many questions, and the numerous photographs of the cathedral and its furnishings.

15 See Colin Holden, *Ritualist on a Tricycle, Frederick Goldsmith. Church, Nationalism and Society in Western Australia 1880-1920* (Nedlands 1997).

16 The Cathedral of St Boniface, Bunbury, was built in six years. One of the large windows depicts St Boniface. The baptistry windows are on the life of St Boniface.

17 Conversation with Dr Holden.

18 Conversation with Williams. The Anglican monks used the renovated buildings as their headquarters, from which to conduct their mission. Aspiring postulants were tried, tested and trained for two years, and only if the Community approved would they be able to join the order. Moses, p 166. Although membership of the Bush Brotherhoods meant making vows, they were often temporary, about five years, whereas those for the Community of the Ascension intended vows to be permanent. Conversation with Dr Holden.

19 Bishopthorpe was built by Bishop Thomas in 1870, and the building destroyed by fire in 1913.

First section rebuilt in 1923- eight rooms.

Chapel consecrated 1924.

Second section rebuilt in 1926 - eight rooms.

Third section rebuilt in 1930 - five rooms.

For three years the members of the Community lived in the stables - the only building left with a roof as a result of the fire. After the first restoration in 1923 the stables were converted into a chapel and sacristy.

Williams was responsible for repairing the ruins, and rebuilding in 1924-5.

and divisional walls largely re-used for the impressive roof trusses. Some highlights were set in the gabled roof, filtering light down into the interior, which, with its plain white walls and dark timbered structure is extremely beautiful. The altar was made from solid trachyte blocks taken from the old walls, and the joints set into white cement.<sup>20</sup> Williams used the long gabled building, created an exquisite Gothic design, and skilfully transformed the old relic into a thing of beauty.<sup>21</sup>

84 (b)

84 (c)

84 (d)

The women formed their own religious orders, which have a complicated and continuing connection with the spirituality of the Oxford Movement, and the Church's attempt to provide a response to widespread poverty.<sup>22</sup>

The Sisters of the Community of the Holy Name's first enterprise, the Mission to the Streets and Lanes, was set up near Melbourne's red light district, as a refuge for wayward women and young girls, whom they hoped to rescue from prostitution.

Williams designed the House of Mercy Community Buildings in 1935 and its Chapel in 1938 at Cheltenham. It is an impressive example of a religious structure in a restrained Spanish mode, especially the tall square tower, which is a distinguishing feature of the main entrance. It was the headquarters of the order, where young girls were taken into care, educated and trained by this band of Anglican sisters.<sup>23</sup> He was responsible for many extensions and

84 (e)

84 (f)

84 (g)

20 Conversation with Williams - personal tapes 1976.

21 This building is now used as a Conference Centre, run by the Canberra/Goulburn Diocese. Archdeacon Hetherington to author, 18 November 1995.

22 Conversation with the Mother Superior of the Community of the Holy Name, Cheltenham. See Lynne Strahan, *Out of the Silence: A Study of a Religious Community for Women*, (Melbourne 1988), p 2. This book gives an excellent account of the early years and later work of the Sisters of the C H N, who started with two mission houses in Little Lonsdale Street, Melbourne in about 1888, and then moved to Spring Street in 1898 (these buildings pre-date Williams). The sisters were an outreach of the Mission to Streets and Lanes, assisting many impoverished, sick and disadvantaged families, the homeless and hopeless. The placing of the sisters in a house near the red light district was the first major initiative of the Diocesan Mission to the Streets and Lanes. Sister Esther moved in during 1888 (conversation with Dr Holden).

23 The Sisters visited gaols, attended courts and befriended wayward girls in need of foster care. They visited hospitals, Fairlea Women's Prison and Mont Park. Williams spoke admiringly of Sister Esther (later Mother Esther), who moved freely in Little Lonsdale Street and some of the seedier areas of Melbourne, recounting that she was highly respected for her compassionate work, and was never once in danger of assault. Conversation with Williams and personal visits to the Community at Cheltenham with the architect. See also Colin Holden, *From Tories at Prayer to Socialists at Mass, St. Peter's, Eastern Hill, Melbourne 1846-1990* (Melbourne 1996), pp 61-4, 259, 262, 268. The sisters worshipped at St Peter's church, Eastern Hill. See also Brian Porter [ed], *Melbourne Anglicans, Diocese of Melbourne 1847-1997* (Melbourne 1997), pp 124-5.



refurbishings to these buildings,<sup>24</sup> which were entirely Williams' creation, and were built on adjacent land to an existing 19th century Gothic building. This earlier building was where the CHN sisters lived and which was then called the House of Mercy, and then, until recently, known as the Retreat House. Williams and partners were responsible for the chapel attached to the Retreat House, sisters' chapel, chaplain's flat, vestry &c.

85

Williams designed the maternity and radiological block and the chapel at St George's Intermediate Hospital, Kew, then staffed by the Sisters of the Holy Name.<sup>25</sup> He later converted the older part into a nurses' home and staff quarters.<sup>26</sup> Some of the larger buildings at St George's were constructed in conjunction with Leighton Irwin. The sisters also set up the Children's Home, Brighton, to care for abandoned and motherless children. Williams made many renovations to this home, which contained one of Christian Waller's delightful stained glass windows depicting cherubs.

86 (c)

Williams was closely involved with Father Maynard of St Peter's, Eastern Hill, during his thirty eight years incumbency, when many architectural works were carried out. Maynard invited Father Gerard K Tucker to bring the whole of the Brotherhood of St Laurence as it was then to Melbourne in June 1933, and take charge of St Mary's mission church in Fitzroy. Father Tucker had inherited an Anglo-Catholic philosophy from his family, who also encouraged his concern for the welfare of the urban poor.<sup>27</sup>

Other strong influences upon Australian Anglo-Catholicism were exerted by its Australian-born leaders; Bishop George M Long of Bathurst and Newcastle and Bishop John S Hart, Bishop of Wangaratta, who were both advocates of the movement for the autonomy of the Australian church.<sup>28</sup> Williams worked with these prelates in designing buildings under their jurisdiction, in particular Bishop Long, when he was for a lengthy period Diocesan architect of Bathurst and also later of Grafton. Bishop Hart presided over a large region

24 The House needed enlarging and radical upgrading of facilities, with well equipped kitchens, an entirely new laundry, store rooms, new sanitation blocks and bathrooms, and new classrooms for educating the forty girls, who also received training in sewing, laundry work and housework. The new brickwork harmonises well with the existing buildings, connected by a quadrangle, and a wide verandah links together the four sides of the building to provide protection from the weather. The sister in charge is able to have a comprehensive view of all branches of the institution from her centrally placed office. The enlarged living accommodation wing was skilfully planned to avoid an institutional environment, with bedrooms, recreational rooms and corridors finished with bright tints and carefully selected colour schemes. Conversation with Peter Newell. The Community of the Holy Name religious complex has been classified by the National Trust. See Trust News, Vol 29 no 7, August 2001.

25 Conversation with Williams. The Maternity hospital was opened in 1925 and the X-ray block in 1931. The hospital catered for the less advantaged in our society.

26 Sister Ida to Williams, 15 September 1938. Sister Ida thanked him for his courtesy and help.

27 Holden, pp 205-6, 211-17. The Brotherhood of St Laurence is one of the largest high profile organisations concerned with social work among disadvantaged groups of all ages, providing hostels for the unemployed, the aged and the sick.

28 Ruth Teale 'George Merrick Long', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 10 (1986), pp 134-5; T B McCall, *The Life and Letters of John Stephen Hart* (Sydney 1963).

of country parishes, when Williams erected churches in Mansfield, Euroa, Shepparton, &c.

Other Anglo-Catholic strongholds were held by Australian-born and educated incumbents, Father John Hope of Christ Church St Laurence in Sydney and Canon E S Hughes of St Peter's, Eastern Hill.<sup>29</sup> Australian Anglo-Catholicism had abandoned many of its English characteristics, 'assuming in their place, nationalist and conservative aspects',<sup>30</sup> which coexisted with the spirit of the Australian church as a whole. The 1933 centenary celebration<sup>31</sup> ensconced Anglicanism 'as simultaneously derivative, nationalist and self-confident'.<sup>32</sup>

In his article on the spirit of the Oxford Movement, Williams discussed the significance and rationale of the churches designed by and for Tractarians and Anglo-Catholics. He emphasised that tradition was valid 'if it enshrined the spirit of devotion and was true to its religious purpose'.<sup>33</sup> In addition, he explained to religious communities how to build new churches to suit the Australian environment. He began his article as a memorial to the Oxford Movement, but subsequently turned it into architectural guidelines for constructing churches that would be worthy of Australian devotion.<sup>34</sup> Because of his wide experience in ecclesiastical architecture, and because he was born and trained in this country, Williams was well qualified to write about the movement and relate it to Australia.

His association with the Anglo-Catholics spanned many decades, beginning when North & Williams moved to the mainland, and carried out work in 1913 on St Peter's Church, Eastern Hill. As Dr Holden has remarked, Williams's exposure to Anglo-Catholics was through his association with Canon Selwyn Hughes.<sup>35</sup> This clergyman had established his Anglo-Catholic identity even before his ordination, and was responsible for alterations in the aspect of the church and the delivery of services. He initiated the use of vestments, and in 1906 incense, the most contentious outward symbol of Anglo-Catholicism, which reportedly caused shock and dismay. This was reputedly the first church in Melbourne in which the liturgical practices of the Anglo-Catholic movement were carried out. Above all, it established St Peter's as the most radical centre of Anglo-Catholicism in the city.<sup>36</sup>

As church architect for St Peter's, Williams continued a close rapport with Hughes until 1926, then Father Farnham E Maynard (1926-64) and later with Father Geoffrey J Taylor (1964-1979).<sup>37</sup> Each of these churchmen contributed to the parish's rich liturgical and cultural heritage. As a result of his long

29 Williams was greatly influenced by Canon Hughes in correct liturgical arrangements.

30 Moses, p 143.

31 For which Williams was invited to write the article referred to above.

32 Moses, pp 142-44.

33 Cable, 'Louis Reginald Williams' in *From Oxford to the Bush*, p 118.

34 Cable, pp 117-119.

35 Conversation with Dr Holden, assistant priest, St Peter's Eastern Hill, Melbourne, who also suggested books to consult about Anglo-catholics.

36 Holden, p 76.

37 Geoffrey Taylor had served as assistant priest to Father F E Maynard for five years before taking over as incumbent. Conversation with Taylor.

association with these clergymen, Williams became well versed in, and had strong leanings toward 'high' church doctrines. But he successfully designed churches, which met the needs of both high and low churchmen. He attended St Andrew's church, Brighton, with its restrained high church influences, though earlier in the century parishioners were not Anglo-Catholics.<sup>38</sup> He was a devout Anglican and church architect at St Andrew's for many years.<sup>39</sup>

In his role as an ecclesiastical architect he dealt with a variety of clients, ranging from archbishops, bishops and vicars, to unsophisticated committees of small outback churches. Because of his diverse skills, he imbued each church with its own distinctive character, suited to its local environment, while meeting the needs and aspirations of each particular parish. He specialised in building churches, chapels, vicarages, Sunday schools, monuments, memorials and several church schools, and had a good understanding of clergymen, vestries and school committees. Williams specialised in ecclesiastical architecture, and in this was unique in Australia.

He had been reared in a very religious family, and received most of his architectural training under the supervision of Alexander North, who at that time was diocesan architect for Tasmania. North was a master of Gothic, and had written several articles, including one on 'Rural Churches'. He was a devout Anglican,<sup>40</sup> steeped in ecclesiology, and imparted his considerable knowledge and wide experience to his diligent pupil, who became his partner.

Williams began his article on the Oxford Movement by pointing out that it exemplified a return to order and sanctity in church architecture, with an emphasis on worship and liturgy. He cited Pugin, who was the first Gothic revivalist of the period, and who strove energetically for the betterment of the churches. Williams ardently believed that the Gothic style represented the true feeling of Christian spirituality. The simple fact is that both theoretically and liturgically, there was a great deal of common ground between the Anglicans of high church tendencies and Roman Catholics. Williams quoted from Pugin's *Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*, about the deplorable state of churches in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

In tracing down the history of communion tables from the Restoration, we find them treated with little respect in any place, and usually with much indignity; in some churches they serve for the transaction of parish business, in others as the depository for the caps, cloaks, and wallets of the school children, who were taught in the chancels as a spare portion of the church. In those churches where Communion Service is celebrated only once a year, we not infrequently find them moved altogether on one side, and generally rotten and disjointed, neglected and perishing - perhaps a decayed and moth-eaten cover, whitened with the dung of birds, hangs in tattered fragments about it - perhaps it is utterly bare.

A Communion Table serves a multitude of purposes; sometimes it forms a scaffold for the mason who is affixing a marble blister against the chancel arch; sometimes for the baptismal basin; sometimes for the parish register; occasionally for the cleaning

38 Conversation with Dr C Holden.

39 Williams rebuilt the church when it was destroyed by fire in 1961. See above.

40 As already noted, North held services in his house 'Holm Lea' before the Chapel at Waterton, Tasmania, was completed and ready for worship.

functionaries to rest both themselves and implements upon. It would be tedious to lengthen this sad list of desecrations, which are common even at the present time, and universal but a few years since. A better spirit has ... arisen, and in many places the tables have been not only decently but well adorned.<sup>41</sup>

The above extract indicated the spirit of the times, and was typical of the Romantic movement, rather than being in any sense a balanced or accurate one. By quoting it, Williams showed his affinity with Romantic ideals and interpretation of church history and architecture. He pointed out that when writing this Pugin implied that a change for the better was occurring in the care of churches, which was reflected in the improved conditions of chancels and sanctuaries.<sup>42</sup>

The Ecclesiologists, who had been spurred on by Pugin's writings, maintained that 'every church of whatever kind, size or shape, should have a chancel at least one-third of the length of the nave and separated from the latter, internally at least, if not externally by a well-defined mark, a chancel-arch if possible, or at least by a screen and raised floor'.<sup>43</sup> Williams noted that pulpits and pews with high surrounding partitions and barred doors were subordinated, while 'those pews ... with the outer flap-seat for the servant who was permitted (!) to sit in the aisle, as apparent excrescence' were denounced as detestable. Fortunately the excellent work, commenced earlier by Wesley, and later conducted so fervently by members of the Oxford Movement has mostly dispensed with such infamy.<sup>44</sup>

Clearly the most important of all ecclesiological principles, after the justification of chancels, was the assault on private pews and galleries. It was proposed that private pews should be abolished entirely and substituted with open benches in the wide central aisle of the nave, or other areas of the church, and be free for the use of the poor. It took some time to phase out private pews completely. J M Neale, one of the co-founders of the Cambridge Camden Society, delivered a blistering attack on private pews as 'the intrusion of human pride, and selfishness, and indolence, into the worship of God'.<sup>45</sup> Private pews were an offence against the church's mission as a universal one, not just to the upper middle classes, while galleries, generally built to look down towards the pulpit, were an expression of the view of the liturgy as an aural, rather than a visual experience.<sup>46</sup>

Williams noted that the advancement of the Gothic Revival through the Oxford Movement had been one of succession from the work of Pugin, and although scholarly, was impregnated with the architectural aim of fidelity to period and style. It was academic, but cold. He believed that 'correct' Gothic might stimulate the Tractarian virtues, but it was the spirit of Gothic that was

41 A W Pugin, *Ecclesiastical Architecture in England* (London 1841), p 143.

42 LRW, 'The Spirit of its Architecture', p 121.

43 J F White, *The Cambridge Movement* (Cambridge 1964), p 94.

44 LRW, 'The Spirit of its Architecture', p 121.

45 J M Neale, *A History of Pews* [sic] Cambridge 1843, p 3. The Ecclesiologists wanted to remove all private pews and replace them with open benches, but had to compromise. See N Yates, *Buildings, Faith and Worship* (Oxford 1991).

46 Conversation with Dr Holden.

important, and not the faithful copying of a dead past, which, in the hands of some architects, lacked that vital spark that makes all the difference.<sup>47</sup>

However, some of the leading English architects whom Williams considered did respond to, and were inspired by the Oxford Movement, were A G Gough in buildings such as St Cuthbert's Philbeach Gardens; Sir Ninian Comper's St Cyprian's; Richard Carpenter's St Paul's, Brighton and St Mary Magdalene's, Munster Square; John D Sedding's, Holy Trinity, Sloane Street ... and John Pearson, whose genius is manifested in St Augustine's Kilburn, while his Truro cathedral, Cornwall, shows that the 'Tractarian ... could inspire its sons to raise a great House of God fit to be the centre of the worship of a diocese'.<sup>48</sup> Pearson's 'churches included all the features required for Tractarian liturgy; stone altar tables, altar crosses, reredoses, altar rails, sedilia, chancel rails or screens, lecterns and litany stools'. Pearson believed the question to ask oneself when entering a church, was not 'is it beautiful, but does it send you on your knees?'.<sup>49</sup> Williams believed that all these architects designed churches, which embodied the spirit of the Catholic Revival; buildings that would provide a background of help for the work of the parish priest and the worship of the people.<sup>50</sup>

The Gothic Revival of 1833 found expression, not only in English literature, but in architecture. Two architect brothers, John and Joshua Brandon, did much to spread an exact knowledge of the principles of Gothic architecture by their book on *Parish Churches* and their *Analysis of Gothic Architecture*.<sup>51</sup> The great churches of the Revival in London stand witness to the work of many architects, among whom were William Butterfield, Sir Gilbert Scott and George E Street, who 'went hand in hand with the Oxford Movement in its early days', as too did George F Bodley, a devoted churchman. For, like Street and Butterfield, Bodley was a loyal and enthusiastic adherent of the Oxford Movement<sup>52</sup> and one of the major Tractarian architects.

Williams singled out William Butterfield as one of the most trusted architects of the Oxford Movement, naming some of his churches, All Saints', Margaret Street; St Alban's Holborn; Keble College Chapel; and St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne. Butterfield was one of the 19th century's most distinguished ecclesiastical architects. He had produced designs that were inspirational, embodying imagination, while observing the spirit of a style, not just a copy of a dead past, as the supposed hallmark of ecclesiastical architecture. He had also introduced more colour into his churches.<sup>53</sup>

47 LRW, 'The Spirit of its Architecture', p 122.

48 Ollard, p 224.

49 A Quiney, *John Loughborough Pearson* (Yale 1979), p 169. As a devout Anglican Pearson always made his communion before he would put pen to paper, or even think of a design for a building. See E W Benson, *Life of Benson*, 1, p 453.

50 LRW 'The Spirit', p 122.

51 J R & J A Brandon, *Parish Churches* (London 1848); *Analysis of Gothic Architecture*, (London 1847). These were part of Williams's library collection. See appendix.

52 Ollard, pp 224-227.

53 LRW 'The Spirit', p 122.

Butterfield was throughout his long life a convinced and devout Tractarian, and his work 'cannot be considered apart from the inner spirit of the Church Revival,' his art was definitely inspired by churchmanship.<sup>54</sup> He was chosen to design All Saints', Margaret Street, which was an unusual church from the beginning. He used bricks when he found the workmen in the district were used to this material. It was an expensive church costing seventy thousand pounds, mainly due to the varied and rare stones used for its polychromy. Outside bands, diapers and zigzags of darker materials were employed which separated the flat surfaces, while inside, patterns of brilliantly contrasted colours were created by the use of glazed tiles, various marbles and even red mastic.<sup>55</sup> It was an extreme example of polychromy to date, to incorporate polychromy in its construction.

Butterfield was the most favoured architect of another powerful group of Anglicans in the 1830s, the Cambridge Camden Society (later known as the Ecclesiologists), who were important as academic promoters of the Gothic revival. They admired All Saints', as noted in the *Ecclesiologist* 'We have never had occasion to notice a more suitable and dignified adaptation to the Anglican ritual than this magnificent church presents'.<sup>56</sup>

Williams believed that the later work of some architects was more inspirational, and again cited Butterfield, who produced churches that had greater individuality and had much more influence than most of his contemporaries. St Paul's cathedral, Melbourne was a creative interpretation of the Gothic forms, largely of Decorative Gothic, but incorporating some features of work he previously used overseas. He repeated the striped treatment he had employed in his Keble College Chapel, England, and earlier at Yealmpton, namely a banded treatment, seen in St Paul's as bands of dark stone, contrasting with the lighter colour of the remaining stonework.<sup>57</sup>

From about 1912 North & Williams were engaged in numerous commissions for the Anglican Church. North was cathedral architect of St Paul's, Melbourne, for several years until the partnership dissolved, when Williams took over for a lengthy period.<sup>58</sup> He felt honoured to be working in this impressive building, which he said, was designed by one of the most trusted architects of the Oxford Movement.

Thompson considers that St Paul's cathedral is 'one of Butterfield's greatest achievements ... architecturally, the interior is one of the great masterpieces of the Gothic Revival and indeed can stand comparison with the mediaeval Italian architecture that inspired it'.<sup>59</sup> The western bay is divided from the

54 Ollard, p 224.

55 T S R Boase, *English Art 1800-1870* (London 1959), p 243.

56 *Ecclesiologist*, XX, 188.

57 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 185.

58 LRW collection (SLV).

59 Paul Thompson, 'Exporting the Gothic Revival: Butterfield's Australian Cathedrals - 1', *Country Life*, 9 September 1971, p 624. Thompson, his major biographer, believed Butterfield was moving beyond an academic approach to Gothic vocabulary, See P Thompson, *William Butterfield* (London 1971).



nave by a tall arch, as at his St Alban's Holborn, while the east end bears a general resemblance to that of Keble Chapel at Oxford.<sup>60</sup>

Butterfield was one of several prominent English architects who designed churches for Australian settings. Others included Bodley, Garner and J L Pearson. Meanwhile, local architects showed increasing competence, and Victorian-based craftsmen furnished and decorated their churches.<sup>61</sup>

Williams believed 'that Gothic architecture was not spent, but still had a message to give, and could be a living, progressing, architectural force ... provided it was accompanied by the search for Truth, Beauty and Goodness'. No work of art can possess real value without some originality, and consequently an aversion to period work in England had emerged. The fact is that better communication between England and Australia, more education and travel, illustrated magazines and books, writing and photography, had all helped architects in Australia to an awareness, that it is not sufficient to look backward for exact examples of present-day needs.<sup>62</sup>

When examining Australia's churches, Williams stressed that we should 'deprecate the copying of Period [*sic*] work as the supposed hallmark of ecclesiastical architecture' as such copying of a dead past could be a 'questionable repetition lacking that vital spark that makes all the difference'. He pointed out that it was the fear of change in Australia's architecture that had largely hampered artistic progress. Architecture should grow out of the spirit of the times and be an expression of confidence in modern thinking. Many designers had been shy of change in architectural form, adhering abjectly to the old order. He said 'was it not because St Stephen had preached and prophesied a changed order of conditions, that he was stoned by the people'. Williams discussed this same phase with Bishop Long, who said 'How well might this attitude be recorded in stone in the form of gargoyles, grotesque figures, evil spirits with their fingers tightly closing their ears, refusing to listen to reason'.<sup>63</sup>

Williams said that it was important when using the Gothic style, which was so flexible and intangible, to thoughtfully adapt it to the environment of the country, stressing that what was appropriate for Northern Europe may not be best for Australia. A freshness of treatment could be achieved in this country by careful study of climatic conditions and by the use of local building materials. While not renouncing a study of past period work, but building up from it, one should be able to give refreshing inspiration to the design. He stated that work must be innovative in its conception, 'based upon reason in

60 B L F Clarke, *Anglican Cathedrals outside the British Isles* (London 1958), p 100.

61 See G M Moore 'Antipodean Gothic'.

62 LRW, 'The Spirit', p 122. Architects such as Butler and North, among others influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement, had already been moving this way in Australia (ie away from a purely academic approach).

63 LRW, 'The Spirit', pp 122-3

architecture'.<sup>64</sup> The Reverend Henry E Mallett,<sup>65</sup> who had studied architecture earlier in his career, summed this up succinctly in an address he gave in 1932.

All architectural styles are capable of development, and the mediaeval period did not exhaust the possibilities of Gothic. Our faithful imitation of mediaeval work is not artistically excellent, and most of our imitation lacks the spirit of the old. What we need is to gather the principles of the old style around our modern needs, our new materials and scientific discoveries, and out of them the true architect will bring new modes of expression.<sup>66</sup>

It is hardly surprising that Williams was influenced by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott's work, citing his large Anglican Liverpool cathedral as an outstanding masterpiece, 'fresh, vigorous, twentieth century Gothic'.<sup>67</sup> Williams's partner, North, appears to have been greatly influenced by the Liverpool cathedral, when designing Trinity College chapel in 1913. As Miley suggests, the most relevant elements of the design, which relate to the chapel, are the exterior of the east end of the cathedral, and the impressive interior masonry bridge, thrown across the nave, which carries the organ in Trinity chapel. Also, the traceries in the chapel echo the traceries in the east window of Liverpool cathedral, which are very unusual, with their branch-like tracery pattern.<sup>68</sup> This device was a regular feature seen in the tracery of churches built later by North and Williams.

When writing on the spirit of the Oxford Movement, Williams was able to express his long held views on what he considered proper for Australia's religious requirements. He designed his buildings to accommodate the varying climatic conditions of this country, ranging from the humidity of Townsville, the heat of Western Australia and parts of New South Wales, to the cooler regions of Victoria and Tasmania. He had advocated the use of materials close to hand, and wherever possible, patronised local craftsmen and local building materials. He emphasised that an ecclesiastical building, no matter how small, 'should possess that elusive quality - atmosphere' <sup>69</sup>

He partly understood his search for the 'spirit of Gothic' as a way of creating a localised expression suited to the Australian landscape. With the Oxford Movement, the academic theologians stress the sacramental life. When it comes to architecture, this means that, for the sake of the altar, the sanctuary is articulated as a major space again. The ideal Gothic revival church has three clearly articulated spaces, along which the eye can move: from the

64 LRW, 'The Spirit', p 122

65 Williams knew Mallett well. He was an architectural pupil at Exeter of R M Llew, a well known Devon architect, who did much ecclesiastical work. Mallett was a surveyor in Exeter for a time before coming to Australia. He was a lay preacher and was ordained a deacon in Melbourne in 1895. He gained his ThL in 1911 and was vicar at St James's, Glen Iris from 1911-1935. I am indebted to Dr Kenneth Cable for this information.

66 As quoted in 'The Spirit of its Architecture', p 123.

67 LRW, 'The Spirit', p 123. Conversation with B Johnson, a former partner of Williams, who maintained that he was considerably influenced by Scott's work.

68 Caroline Miley, *Trinity College Chapel: An appreciation* (Melbourne 1997), pp 32-33.

69 LRW 'The Spirit', p 123.

congregation, up the chancel (normally containing the choir stalls) and into the sanctuary. The articulation of space in this way, with the sanctuary gradually approached and clearly defined, expressed a sense of graded or hierarchical order - from the laity in the body of the church, moving through the choir to the clergy in the sanctuary. However many churches, especially in some rural communities, were two chamber structures (sanctuary and congregation) that still fulfilled the basic ideals, as long as the articulation of the spaces was clear.<sup>70</sup>

Williams was a skilful architect, who had a good rapport with the Anglican hierarchy, and had the highest number of commissions from the Anglican church across Victoria of any single architect.<sup>71</sup> He believed that those responsible for decision-making in church building, should observe the crucible of Truth. He aimed for the construction of good quality churches, on a tight budget. He deplored sham materials and insisted on truth in construction. He cautioned church authorities that if the proposed building were to be built of wood, it must possess the characteristics of timber construction, as no imitation of stone or brick should be tolerated. Tuck-pointing only gives an artificial and monotonous appearance; also, it is not permanent and often covers up an inferior quality of work.<sup>72</sup>

Williams was familiar with committees and their grandiose ideas, but advised that when building a small church, they should make sure that the design and plan are simple; no attempt should be made to create a miniature cathedral, which would result in a sense of restlessness in the design. He stressed simplicity and proportion. There should be no straining after effect, instead they should rely upon faithful, simple and well-proportioned work.

He pointed out that in many instances transepts could be dispensed with, unless put to their original use, which was the accommodation of chapels. He argued that congregations facing each other are not conducive to worship. Aisles, as arcaded passageways, are necessary for processions; also they introduce a pleasant play of line and shadow, which in turn creates a note of mystery and vista. It will be seen then, that a wide nave without aisles is generally not very pleasing, and could resemble an auditorium. If the question of cost arises, it should be understood that aisles actually reduce the span of the roof, and thus lower the cost of that portion of the building, which in turn helps to reduce any extra cost of the arcaded aisles.

Williams's keynote to successful church designing 'should be subordinate all the various features to the main theme, which should be the church as a sanctuary for the altar. Also let there be a definite offering of space', adding

in our search for beauty in architecture, we must see that creations are not evolved for the reason of satisfying a selfish desire of art for art's sake, but rather should they spring from that vital impulse that created so many of the fine buildings down through the centuries of our church's history - the devotion of the faithful.

70 Conversation with Dr Holden.

71 Conversation with Bishop James Grant, former Dean of St Paul's cathedral, Melbourne.

72 LRW 'The Spirit', p 123.

May each new church arise as an offering of faith and thanksgiving; in trust that the pure worship of God will flourish, and the Holy Gospel of Christ be diligently and sincerely preached.<sup>73</sup>

With the Oxford Movement of 1833, Gothic became the ideal style for Christian churches. The basic underlying style of Williams's work is Gothic, and most of his earlier designs followed a free Gothic revival style.<sup>74</sup> He worked within the spirit of Gothic, adapting to 'modern methods of construction and a commonsense use of materials',<sup>75</sup> while developing his own style, influenced in part by the late English Arts & Crafts movement.<sup>76</sup> He found that up to the 1950s any obvious change in planning and design, often encountered disquiet among clergy and laity, reflected in a report he wrote about the controversial winning design for the Sydney Cathedral,

the fact the premiated work is not a copy of period Gothic should not in itself be condemnation, especially as the design shows such masterly restraint, dignity and charm. The architects' conception shows it to be something different from what we are accustomed to expect, but freshness of thought in the hands of a master of Gothic is to be welcomed.<sup>77</sup>

St Edmund's, Wembley, Western Australia (1952-3),<sup>78</sup> is a combination of old and modern architecture, with a western choir gallery built over the baptistry and a pipe organ loft in the first floor of the tower, rising above the main entrance. Built of brick with a hammer beam roof, it has load bearing cavity walls of sixteen inches [406 mm] thick piers and buttresses. The roof trusses are not evenly spaced, but in pairs, and the inner portion of the walling pushed out level with the outside buttresses to form a niche on the inside for extra seating, or a dignified memorial.<sup>79</sup> Kellock's rose window is set high above the altar.

88

88 (h)

Williams insisted on first class construction, often recommending building in stages. All Saints' Canowindra and St Peter's, Peak Hill were both built in sections.<sup>80</sup> Many churches were designed with towers, but some were not built, as at St Stephen's, Gardenvale. He always designed with vision, and rather than scrimp on the basic design and construction of the church, he wisely initiated building the core of a well designed building, leaving it to successive generations to complete.

73 LRW 'The Spirit', p 124.

74 Illustrated in the Church of the Epiphany, Northcote. Won in competition in 1925.

75 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 195.

76 Seen in St Nicholas's, Mordialloc; St Ambrose, Gilgandra; St Stephen's, Darebin; St Stephen's, Gardenvale; and All Saints' Emu.

77 Louis R Williams, 'An appreciation of the Winning design for the Sydney Cathedral competition', *Australian Church Quarterly*, III (29 September 1938), p 45.

78 The church was consecrated in 1956 to honour the pioneers of Western Australia.

79 Conversation with Williams (LRW tapes); after viewing this church the cathedral chapter, Perth, invited Williams to design St Boniface's Cathedral, Bunbury, W A.

80 All Saints', Canowindra, begun 1926-8, completed 1956; St Stephen's, Peak Hill, begun 1928, completed 1949. St Paul's Caulfield (1938-40), chapel (1961).

St George's, Parkes, built in two stages,<sup>81</sup> shows the development of Williams's thinking, and is a good example of the middle modern Gothic period of his style. It possesses a mediaeval character without emulating Gothic detail, and has a sculptural quality, enhanced by brilliant modelling, tremendous solidity, bold mouldings, and deep overhang shadows, especially in the recesses. Pinnacles are heavily corbelled, while large corbels linking the turrets on the mini towers, though not functional, create an interesting effect. 89 (a-c)

The changes that took place between the design and construction of stages one and two, show his development from a more complicated, horizontal earthbound (Arts & Crafts) style to a bolder, simpler (modern Gothic) style emphasizing the vertical (aspiring) elements. The finer detail in a simpler mass gives a larger scale to the building.<sup>82</sup> Built on a steeply sloping hillside site, this asymmetrical church, with its high pitched roof and massive tower over the crossing, dominates much of the town.<sup>83</sup> This building is one of Williams' finest works, and a building of great power and creativity.

It may reasonably be said that Williams worked within the spirit of Gothic, 'restrained and freed from copying specific historical style'<sup>84</sup> and had successfully devised an architectural style that was appropriate for the Australian climate and ideal for Anglican ceremonial. His churches were always liturgically correct, which greatly enhanced his reputation among clergy, knowing they would not lose their footing at the altar, would have sufficient room in the sanctuary, and above all, not see their notes sliding down to the floor as they stood at the lectern.<sup>85</sup>

Williams believed the Oxford Movement had inspired an architectural revival. The significance of this lay not in a particular form, but in its truth to Australia's religious requirements. He maintained that a religious building must be suitable to its setting and fitting to its purpose. This was the focus of his discourse on the spirit of Tractarian architecture.<sup>86</sup>

81 Begun 1927, completed 1957. Kellock's west window symbolises Service and Sacrifice honouring servicemen of World Wars I, II, and Korea. Williams was thanked 'for his original design, and invaluable advice' Secretary to Williams, 9 January 1957 (SLV).

82 Conversation with Blyth Johnson.

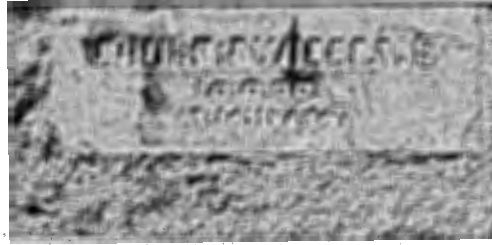
83 The space under the nave allowed for a room of the same size, to serve as a kindergarten, which is claimed to be the coolest room in Parkes.

84 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 191.

85 Conversation with Bishop James Grant.

86 Cable, p 118.

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT



When Williams was building up his architectural practice in the early part of the twentieth century, it was a busy time for ecclesiastical architects. Tasmania was too small to offer much scope for an architect with ambitions to practise in this field. But there was a demand for new buildings to meet the rapid growth of the Church of England in Victoria, which was being organised as an ecclesiastical province of five dioceses.<sup>1</sup> He designed churches, church halls, Sunday schools, vicarages, church schools, chapels, kindergartens, and a hospital.

Many new churches were built during the North & Williams partnership, and by Williams in his own practice.<sup>2</sup> He played an important role in the historical development of church architecture in Australia, and worked with many Anglican archbishops in the various states during his long architectural practice.<sup>3</sup>

### Pence

Williams never sacrificed integrity for a dearth of funds, but few architects have the happiness of erecting a church without reference to the cost. The question often posed is, 'not what will be most worthy, but what will cost least'.<sup>4</sup>

- 1 H W Nunn, *A Short History of the Church of England in Australia 1847-1947*, pp 57-9. Dr Lowther Clarke, fourth Bishop of Melbourne and its first archbishop, contributed greatly to Anglicanism in this State. During his episcopate the life of the grammar schools was reinforced and the number of scholars increased fivefold. The church took over Merton Hall and Firbank, while Korowa, Ivanhoe CEGGS and other schools were founded. New churches, vicarages and Sunday schools were built.
- 2 *Church of England Messenger*, 27 July 1928, p 338. The quantity of ecclesiastical buildings built in 1928 alone, established that 'it was an era of church building'.
- 3 Archbishop Dr Lowther Clarke (1902-20); Archbishop Clarke Lees (1921-29); Archbishop Frederick Waldegrave Head (1930-41); Archbishop Joseph John Booth (1942-56); Archbishop Sir Frank Woods (1957-77).
- 4 *Church of England Messenger* (March 1916), p 13.



### Earlier Anglican Patronage

Father Geoffrey Taylor<sup>5</sup> recalls that Williams credited his understanding of church design mainly to Alexander North and Canon Selwyn Hughes.<sup>6</sup> The breadth of Williams's earlier Anglican patronage was possibly through his association with Hughes, who had commissioned North to design the new school and hall buildings for St Peter's church, Eastern Hill, and possibly introduced the two men. Williams continued his association with St Peter's after Hughes's resignation and wrote short articles for the *Australian Church Quartley*, a journal edited by Hughes's successor, F E Maynard.<sup>7</sup>

Through various channels, Hughes became a central figure for powerful high church bishops from around Australia when they visited Melbourne: firstly, he had been a close colleague of such men as John Stephen Hart (Wangaratta 1927-42). Commissions for Williams during his episcopates were at Shepparton, Euroa, Mansfield Seymour and Myrtleford).<sup>8</sup>

13 (h)

Other patrons were Reginald Stephen (Newcastle, 1919-28) and George M Long (Bathurst, 1911-27) in their earlier years in Melbourne. Secondly, bishops such as J S Hart and Reginald C Halse (Riverina, 1925-42) frequently attended St Peter's, making it their home base when in Melbourne, as did Anglo-Catholic bishops from further away (Queensland, North-West Australia) and the Bush Brotherhood members.

Many parishes in the Bathurst diocese were worked by members of the Brotherhood of the Good Shepherd. Thirdly, assisted by his wife Isabell, a woman of independent means, Hughes was able to provide entrée to parts of Melbourne society. He was often asked for advice by the bishops in this circle, and was able to place Williams's name before them, and initiate introductions when required.<sup>9</sup>

It appears that Williams's country commissions in New South Wales were all in parishes in dioceses whose bishops were regarded with suspicion, if not hostility, by the Sydney diocesan establishment, particularly Bishop Long and his successor, Lomas Wylde in Bathurst and Reginald Halse in the Riverina. These bishops, when visiting Sydney, did not have influence in Sydney diocesan circles in which the diocesan architect, Leslie Wilkinson had supreme power.

The bishops went to, and were made welcome at Christ Church St Laurence and St James King Street, which both had strong connections with St Peter's, Eastern Hill. Wilkinson's commissions were all from parishes that were associated with the Sydney power bloc, whereas Williams's work derived from the opposite faction. Accordingly two major architects worked in the

5 Assistant priest St Peters 1959-64, vicar St Peters 1964-1979.

6 Vicar St Peter's 1900-1926.

7 Vicar 1926-1964.

8 Seymour is just after Bishop Hart's resignation.

9 Conversation with Dr Holden.

same state without their circles conflicting, because their patronage coincided with major fault lines in ecclesiastical politics.<sup>10</sup>

Many of Williams's churches were featured in the *Church Standard*,<sup>11</sup> a high church Anglican journal published in Sydney with a national circulation. It was founded in an earlier form by Hughes (the *Mitre*, Melbourne 1898, which amalgamated with other interstate papers and became the *Church Commonwealth*, then in turn the *Church Standard*). Although Hughes was not the *Church Standard's* editor, he wielded considerable influence with both the editor and board. Williams's country churches were all commissioned for parishes in dioceses whose bishops were part of the Hughes's circle.<sup>12</sup>

## Materials

Williams was a forward thinker and in the 1920s included modern technology in his buildings, particularly reinforced concrete, which he sometimes used for his structural framework. He had a great knowledge of construction and an instinctive value of the quality of materials. Like Pugin, he used materials close to hand, stone from nearby quarries, bricks and tiles from domestic kilns, and native timbers.

## Design Principles

Williams supported Pugin's tenet in his *True Principles* 'that there should be no features about a building which are not necessary for convenience, construction, or propriety' stressing that 'all ornament should consist of enrichment of the essential construction of the building ... decorate your

---

10 Holden.

11. The chapel for the Community of Ascension, Goulburn.

'A small bush parish church'.

Completion of St Saviours', Goulburn.

Anglican church, Nyngan, NSW (dio Bathurst)

St Silas's, Albert Park

Side elevation, St John's, Morpeth, NSW (dio Newcastle)

Completion for St Luke's, Brighton.

Church of the Epiphany, Northcote.

St Augustine's, Shepparton (dio Wangaratta)

New England Girls School, Armidale, NSW, chapel.

St Barnabas's, West Wyalong, NSW (dio Bathurst).

St John's, Young, NSW (dio Goulburn).

All Saints', Newtown.

St Peter's, Broken Hill, NSW (dio Riverina).

All Saints', Canowindra, NSW (dio Bathurst).

All Saints' chapel, Geelong Grammar School.

St George's Parkes, NSW (dio Bathurst)..

Holy Trinity, Ararat (dio Ballarat).

Font cover, St Paul's cathedral, Melbourne

St Matthew's, East Geelong.

I am extremely grateful to Dr Colin Holden, assistant priest, St Peter's, Eastern Hill, for all the information concerning Williams's earlier Anglican patronage.

12. Holden, op cit.

construction, not construct your decoration'.<sup>13</sup> Williams said that the first step in designing a church was to know the size of the congregation and then work out the space for the pews.<sup>14</sup> The interior of the church should be so designed as to lead the eye naturally without distraction towards the altar.<sup>15</sup>

### Furnishings

He concurred with Haddon, that 'It may be taken as a safe policy of modern practice that the designer of the building should also be the designer of the furnishings'. This widened the responsibility of the architect, and enabled him to produce 'that harmony of equipment without which no building can be said to be wholly complete'.<sup>16</sup>

Williams designed excellent furnishings, which reflected Arts & Crafts influences. He admired the beauty of Australian woods, which were suitable for furnishings, and agreed with Haddon, that 'both in structure, breadth of variety, and richness of figure they take a very high place ... and should prove an ever-expanding asset in our best furnishing work'.<sup>17</sup> His timbers were fumed with ammonia to darken the colour and enhance their appearance.

### North's influence

North strongly believed that Australian timbers were equal to, if not better than many of those grown overseas, and constantly used native timbers in his buildings, particularly for small country churches and for his superb furnishings. North's influence<sup>18</sup> is reflected in some of Williams's early concrete and timber churches. These churches were created in a diversity of ecclesiastical forms, regardless of the paucity of funds.

Although Williams was sometimes deemed a traditionalist, he realised that creativity and variation are necessary in church architecture, if it is not to be restrained by the past, and no doubt endorsed North's views -

To say that a modern building is designed in any particular style of architecture is generally incorrect, and often somewhat misleading, because although the present should be the outcome of the past, architecture no more than any other art can remain stationary if it is to live in sympathy with the present age, and suit itself to modern requirements ... and until this is the case there can be no living architecture. Yet for an architect to say that he has not followed the style of some past period, is now regarded by most as the height of egotism, I abhor eccentricities, I think that the past should be studied tenderly and lovingly, but why should development be checked, and the springs of fancy frozen in architecture, at a time when every other science is expected to be full of energy and fresh ideas.<sup>19</sup>

13 A W Pugin, *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture; Set Forth in two lectures at St Marie's Oscott* (London 1941), p 1.

14 Conversation with Williams.

15 LRW 'Some Phases of Church Architecture in Australia'. p 20

16 Haddon, p 186.

17 Haddon, p 186.

18 See chapter one for full details about North's influence on Williams.

19 North to Carew-Smyth, Government Director of Art, 11 January 1916 (SLV).

## Other influences

Williams believed Australia was fortunate in having many competent architects, who had trained in England and were familiar with the Gothic Revival of Pugin. According to Williams, Edmund Blacket, an eminent architect, designed churches in the Gothic styles with consummate skill.<sup>20</sup> His contribution to architecture is enormous, both for the high quality of his work and as an innovator in Australian ecclesiastical architecture. As Joan Kerr notes, his small stone country churches with their separately roofed parts, small bellcotes, gabled roofs and lancet windows, were not only well proportioned and picturesque, but became the prototype for the Victorian church of New South Wales.<sup>21</sup> Williams employed some of these features in his own country churches, particularly small and interesting bellcotes, gabled roofs, and small lancet windows in hot climates to reduce glare and heat. The separately roofed parts were also present in some of his small suburban churches.

Blacket designed St James's cathedral, Townsville, but only part of the east end was built. In 1957 Williams was commissioned to provide a completely new design for the western facade and completion of the building.<sup>22</sup> Blacket's only Victorian church, Christ Church, Geelong (1847) is an unusual example of the Perpendicular Gothic style. It is one of Victoria's oldest churches, with additions made by others in 1855.<sup>23</sup> Williams was later responsible for interior alterations, furniture and fittings for this church.

Horbury Hunt, seems to have inspired Williams. He admired Hunt's meticulous care in supervision, and his knowledge of timber construction, combined with an artistry in the handling of brickwork. This, too, was an area where Williams excelled, both in his scrupulous supervision and his imaginative brickwork. Hunt had made an extraordinary contribution in the ecclesiastical field.<sup>24</sup> He gave freshness and individuality to his designs and avoided inspired academic repetition of historic styles. Williams was very impressed by the detail in his drawings, carefully studied his many buildings, and wrote a review of Freeland's book on Hunt.<sup>25</sup>

## Other buildings

Even though specialising in ecclesiastical work, Williams accepted other

20 LRW, 'Church Architecture', p 184.

21 Joan Kerr, *Our Great Victorian Architect, Edmund Thomas Blacket (1817-1883)*, National Trust of Australia (NSW) 1983, pp 8-13; passim. He was chief architect for the diocese of Bishop Broughton, who was at the time the first and only Anglican bishop in Australia. In 1843 Blacket was appointed Inspector of Anglican Schools in the Colony and then in 1847 Diocesan architect and Colonial architect in 1849.

22 See chapter 'Cathedrals'.

23 Lewis, p 123.

24 He designed many churches, the Grafton and Armidale Cathedrals, and in his commercial work was involved in developing the saw-tooth roof form of construction.

25 Book review by Louis Williams on F M Freeland's *Architect Extraordinary: The Life and Work of John Horbury Hunt, 1838-1904*, in *Victorian Historical Magazine*, 42, 4 (November 1971), pp 705-6.

commissions, as did the partnership,<sup>26</sup> and designed day centres, vicarages,<sup>27</sup> a masonic lodge,<sup>28</sup> houses, and other buildings.<sup>29</sup> He designed the earlier wings at St George's Intermediate hospital Kew,<sup>30</sup> and one of his most beautiful buildings, the Community House, Cheltenham.<sup>31</sup> The Horseley Homes Brighton, comprised separate brick cottages for elderly clergy,<sup>32</sup> and the War Memorial Youth and Synod Centre, Grafton, catered for overnight travellers.<sup>33</sup> In these buildings Williams proved his ability to diversify his skills to accommodate each commission. 86 (c)  
84 (e-f)  
86 (d-e)

St John's College, Morpeth, a theological training college, was designed as a master plan to be built in stages, the first wing was erected in 1925.<sup>34</sup> Williams was architect to Firbank CEGGS for over fifty years,<sup>35</sup> added classrooms to other schools, and altered the old assembly hall at Melbourne CEGGS designed in the North & Williams partnership.<sup>36</sup> 86 (b)

He erected many parish centres, notably the large multi-purpose hall at John's

- 26 Including the large warehouse for Messrs. Harrison, San Miguel & Co Pty Ltd in Melbourne, erected in 1914 in reinforced concrete on the KM system, and supplied plans for the adjacent building in Elizabeth Street for D White, in a contemporary style (LRW collection of architectural drawings SLV).
- 27 Especially the two-storey vicarage, St John's, Healesville.
- 28 This could be used as a single building or two components, comprising the lodge branch and a renting section, that included a large ballroom.
- 29 These included private houses, flats, schools, chemist shops, small and large city offices, warehouses, community centres, kindergartens, and scout halls (SLV).
- 30 It was run by the Sisters of the Community of the Holy Name, and was one of the few hospitals that catered for the poor and disadvantaged. *Herald* (29 October 1924). It was owned by the Mission to the Streets & Lanes, later sold to buy 'Ellerslie', a home for elderly women in East Hawthorn. Conversation with Sister Elizabeth Gwen, C H N.
- 31 Williams was responsible for upgradings in the 50s and 60s when additions were made to the original 'L' shaped building to form an enclosed quadrangle (see appendix). I am indebted for this information to Peter Newell, who began his training in Williams's office and was involved in some of the work for the Community House
- 32 *Church of England Messenger* (23 December 1919), p 1234.
- 33 LRW files (SLV), *Church of England Messenger* (17 December 1954).
- 34 The buildings were planned to form a quadrangle, connected by an arcaded cloister, with the chapel being the dominant note in the outline of the buildings, situated on the hilltop overlooking the Hunter River. Williams to E H Bergman giving permission to publish the perspective and his descriptive notes. 14 April 1926 (SLV).
- 35 In 1918 he prepared plans for the first classrooms as an extension to the original school building, and four years later designed the assembly hall. Hindley House was acquired from the Tyson family, and converted into Firbank's main boarding house. He designed the old junior School, class rooms at Midhurst, the chapel, craft rooms, and assembly hall. He worked in conjunction with John Scarborough in the building of a new tuck shop, library, gymnasium, Cameron Wing and science block, *Firbank Gazette*, 8 (April 1970).
- 36 He transformed the hall by dividing it horizontally with a concrete floor half way up. Windows were properly divided in height with the trusses &c. adjusted to create a new assembly hall and the new chapel of St Luke, showing to advantage the strikingly beautiful open beam roof. The walls painted white, and with unobtrusive concealed artificial lighting, give an effect of light and spaciousness. The stained glass west window with its deep reds and blues dissolves into light blues and golds, with the school coat of arms at the very top. *MCEGGS Magazine* (June 1967) pp 1-4. It was admired as 'a real triumph of beauty and efficiency ... '

Toorak, designed to become 'the living room of the parish'.<sup>37</sup> Community centres were built for the South Melbourne Presbyterian Church, and the Church of Emmanuel, Oakleigh. He built kindergartens, Sunday schools, and the interesting church/cum hall of St Stephen's, Warrandyte.<sup>38</sup> 39 (e)

Williams, in conjunction with Gawler & Drummond, completely remodelled the large commercial block formerly known as St James's buildings, comprising seven separate buildings.<sup>39</sup> St Matthew's parish hall, Prahran, was remodelled with a cantilever verandah and converted into shops. 87 (a)  
87 (b)

In the sixties Williams and Partners built several houses, some surgeries, and offices for the Australian Jersey Herd Society, and a timber and hardware store and show rooms for W J Inglis Pty Ltd of Preston.<sup>40</sup> 87 (d-e)

## Stone

His churches were mostly of brick, but he would have preferred more opportunities of working with stone,<sup>41</sup> which he used to complete Holy Trinity Cathedral, Wangaratta<sup>42</sup>, and the new St Mark's Chapel, Naval War Memorial, Flinders.<sup>43</sup> This building reflects the extra beauty of large expanses of plain wall, so characteristic of his designs, that he was able to achieve with the heavier texture of stone, and it is a pity that it was not feasible to employ this material more often. His last commission before retiring was the bluestone rock-faced War Memorial narthex of St Stephen's, Portland.<sup>44</sup> 45  
14 (h)

## Innovations

Some interesting innovations are evident at St Paul's, Caulfield, which he perceived as a transition from the earlier forms of his 'cottage' churches, built for small parishes, at Mordialloc, Mathoura and Bittern, constructed of red 21

37 It is possible to partition the building most effectively for recreation or Christian education, and to be used by diverse groups at the same time.

38 It comprised a well equipped kitchen, a nave and platform for both church and social purposes, while a sanctuary could be separated from the nave by means of large screen doors. The old church hall was destroyed in the 1939 bush fire (SLV).

39 This large property owned by the Anglican Church, was once the site of a school for both boys and girls, originally designed by Charles Laing. St James's buildings, William Street, were designed by Terry & Oaken (conversation with M Lewis). The buildings extended along the entire frontage on the west side of William Street from Little Collins Street to Bourke Street (correspondence 1933-1956, SLV).

40 These buildings were designed by the younger partners.

41 Trinity College Chapel, although originally designed for stone, was built of brick.

42 Quarried from the Warby Ranges (a pinkish grey granite).

43 (Now Westernport)

44 Williams had previously designed the carved reredos using the motif of the stylized gum leaf to great effect. G M Mathewson designed St Stephen's in 1854-6, and it was extended 122 years later. John Miles, church warden and builder, organised a committee to sub-contract the work. Matching bluestone for the walls was located at Caramut House, near Portland, where the stonemason, George Behncke cut some blocks on the site. The quote for the addition shocked even the architect, but with 1500 man hours of voluntary work by tradesmen and specialists, the church was completed in 1976. Williams said 'it was a wonderful effort ... with the parishioners themselves building God's house'. *Church Scene* (15 July 1976).



brick with terracotta detailing. The square-headed windows and internal buttresses were considered quite unusual at the time.<sup>45</sup>

### Perfectionist

Substandard materials were rejected, and his reputation for first class work was legendary. Builders and craftsmen knew that shoddy workmanship would not be tolerated. Williams was scrupulously fair minded, but his quiet demeanour often belied his strict building ethics.<sup>46</sup>

He recalled that when building brick classrooms at Firbank in 1959, the whole upper floor of approximately 150 ft [45.7 m] long concrete slab had to be broken up and re-laid, because the concrete was not adhering to the steel rods and was highly unsatisfactory. He was sympathetic towards the builder, whom he stressed was not at fault, but through lack of knowledge an additive had been put into the ready mix concrete. After extensive sample squares had been tested it was considered too risky to retain the floor and endanger lives.<sup>47</sup>

### Towers

He frequently included a tower in his design, sometimes at the angle of an 'L' shaped building,<sup>48</sup> or as a dominant corner tower.<sup>49</sup> His sturdy towers are easily recognisable, placed mostly at the west, occasionally the east,<sup>50</sup> while others crowned the crossing.<sup>51</sup> Archbishop Lowther Clarke strongly believed that 'a church was not a church without a tower',<sup>52</sup> but it was not always affordable. Williams stated that a church should have some distinguishing mark soaring into the skyline marking its presence, which could be achieved inexpensively by a freestanding vertical masonry shaft or a spear-like copper sheathed spire.<sup>53</sup> But in his later churches he realised that a spire was a more appropriate feature and better suited to modern architecture.<sup>54</sup>

### Cooler churches

When designing churches he was constantly mindful of the environment

45 This device was used at the Church of the Holy Innocents, Bourke, NSW; St Mark's Naval Chapel (Westernport) and elsewhere.

46 Newell said he had never heard him raise his voice to anyone on the site, and had always gained the respect of contractors. The same builders, artists and artisans always tendered for his jobs. Conversation with Newell, and personal experience.

47 Conversation with Williams. Tests were made by RMIT and others, particularly Dr F A Blake, CSIRO. When the condemned floor was broken up, those present also included J Scarborough, consulting engineers, builders and Specified Concrete P/L. There was no question of dishonest practice, but one of ignorance of a technical point, and the unsuspecting use of presumed below average batch of supplied cement.

48 Thomson Memorial Presbyterian church, Ormond.

49 Methodist (Uniting) church, Canterbury.

50 St Boniface cathedral, Bunbury, Western Australia.

51 St George's, Parkes, New South Wales.

52 *Church of England Messenger* (19 September 1919), p 1067.

53 LRW 'Church Architecture'. p 192.

54 Holy Trinity, Pascoe Vale; All Saints, East Malvern; St Andrew's, Brighton.

and gave special consideration to congregations in very hot climates. He used overhanging eaves to cast long shadows, deeply recessed openings, arcaded cloisters to reduce the heat, and well shaded porches to counteract the sun, while triangular buttresses generated shadows. He placed pressed cement or brick grilles outside timber or glass openings in aisle walls, which allow a through current of air. Aisle windows were positioned higher on side walls to reduce the penetration of the sun's rays. In later years ceilings were insulated, and light coloured bricks in the interior added to the overall atmosphere of respite from the external heat.

St Nicholas's, Floreat Park, built of cream bricks inside and out, has a high pitched roof, insulated ceiling, no east window,<sup>55</sup> and openable grilles. On the east side of the tower a colonnade of timber posts supporting a flat roof forms a cloistered way to the secondary entrance of the church, with an enclosed lawn, while connecting cloisters provide shade on the north side.<sup>56</sup> 89 (d-e)

### Later buildings

The buildings which probably show Williams's late style best, are St John's Camberwell, St Boniface Cathedral, Bunbury and St Andrew's, Brighton, which were all large projects.<sup>57</sup> He kept a tight rein on them, but on lesser buildings was happy to let his staff have a free hand after he had done an initial sketch plan. He chiefly intervened in the construction process to ensure that the highest standards of supervision were provided, and generally retained contact with the clients, except where they were those of staff members, associates or partners.<sup>58</sup> Two 'modern' churches with well designed furniture and fittings are St Paul's, Kingsville and Holy Trinity, Ulverstone, Tasmania. Holy Trinity contains some splendid Alan Sumner stained glass windows.<sup>59</sup> 89 (f-h) 90

In St Peter's, Leeton, NSW, a late work, Williams combines features of several of his modern churches, but the tower is traditional Williams. Johnson suggests a much lighter tower would have been more appropriate to the style of the building.<sup>60</sup> Diverse surfaces of rough brick and wood were cleverly deployed to break up the plain lines of the interior walls.<sup>61</sup> In his late period he used staggered walling with vertical strip windows in the side walls of the sanctuary. Reflected light is obtained from long narrow windows on either side of the wall behind the altar. A feature unique to this church is the porte-cochère at the west end, which provides substantial shelter for weddings, &c. Williams got the most important aspect right - the interior 91

55 LRW 'Church Architecture', p 190. When authorities insisted on eastern windows, he placed them high up on the wall, and not extended down to the top of the altar.

56 Williams to Rector J C Watts, 12 August 1959, describing the church, also his letter to Editor, *West Australian* (28 November 1962),SLV.

57 He used various ideas for reredoses, a painted mural, curtains, a large cross on a plain wall, curtain and riddell posts, mosaic set in marble, wood, panelling, &c.

58 Conversation with B Johnson, See appendix 'buildings' for details and designers.

59 The partners were mainly responsible for the design of these two churches.

60 Conversation with Johnson, who kindly supplied many photographs.

61 Of interest are the granite altar, free-standing on eight granite pillars, and the granite font made from a single rock.

space with its sacred character, and the view to the sanctuary.

### Anglican hierarchy

Williams had always had a good rapport with the Anglican hierarchy since the days of Archbishop Lowther Clarke, and this continued with Sir Frank Woods. Johnson said that Sir Frank was a very broadminded archbishop, who did much to encourage the building of modern churches in Australia. He also said that Melbourne was leading Australia in modern liturgical design at that time.<sup>62</sup>

Sir Frank spoke with Williams about St Andrew's, Brighton.

I had for a long time been interested in liturgical reform and suggested ... that there was a marvellous opportunity to build a new church with the liturgical reform ideas incorporated in it, that is to say that the altar should not be far away from the congregation, but as close ... as possible, that the choir should not form a barrier between the sanctuary and the people, but should be accommodated somewhere perhaps alongside of the congregation, rather than in front of it, and that the altar and altar rails should be in the form of a semi-circle round the altar.<sup>63</sup>

But Archdeacon Codrington had advised the archbishop that the people of Brighton would never accept a modern liturgical arrangement to replace their important landmark. St Andrew's is the high point of Williams's later years. It is a good modern/traditional building, and has some of the lightness of modern architecture (spire, long windows, flush ceiling &c).

Cable suggests various sources of Williams's style, commencing with his early stage, the Arts & Crafts school trained by North. Later, the work of Giles Gilbert Scott,<sup>64</sup> and Edward Maufe in England, stimulated his interest in contemporary developments.<sup>65</sup> Cable says he admired and worked in a modified Mediterranean manner - as did some of his colleagues - deeming it in the thirties suitable for the Australian scene. In his later work, post-war modernism was discernible in his designs.<sup>66</sup> This is a fairly accurate description of his sources. He was influenced in part by the furniture Frank Lloyd Wright designed for his houses during his Arts and Crafts era, which is apparent in the splendid furniture Williams produced during that period.<sup>67</sup>

Josephine Johnson said 'he was a landmark personality in the development of Australian church architecture, and development would have been different if Louis Williams had not worked'. Blyth Johnson remarked that he

62 Conversation with Johnson.

63 Archbishop Sir Frank Woods to author, 5 May 1990. Also conversation with Woods.

64 Scott's influence is also manifested in North's design for Trinity College Chapel.

65 See also *New Churches Illustrated*, St Thomas' Church, Hanwell, p 36.

66 Cable, 'Louis R Williams' in *From Oxford to the Bush* (Canberra 1997), p 119.

67 Conversations with John Paul and Blyth Johnson (L Williams & Partners). Johnson said that he was so impressed with Williams's designs from this period, that it became the starting point for the furniture he designed for the office between 1956 and 1964.

had developed a good characteristic style which make his churches readily recognisable.<sup>68</sup>

In a letter to the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. on his retirement, Williams said 'I have enjoyed the whole of the time spent in my Profession, in the branch of it, in which I specialised, namely Ecclesiastical Architecture, and were I starting again would still wish to pursue a similar architectural path, and with the same quality of Builder who was not just a contractor only, and tradesmen, the majority of whom took a pride in their skills'.<sup>69</sup>

When he retired he received letters from all over Australia. Best Overend, a contemporary, said, '... It falls to few people to be a legend in their own lifetime, but you have, and for the last decades of my life, your name has been linked with the best of Australian ecclesiastical architecture ... '<sup>70</sup>

Williams proved his ability to provide traditional as well as modern architecture in his practice, while successfully demonstrating the skilful handling of space, light and form. He was an excellent managing director and read the market well. He had close links with his clients and selected good staff, who could create churches in the modern style, and gave them a relatively free hand with minimum interference. However he always maintained high standards in structural design and site supervision.<sup>71</sup>

It was an extraordinary achievement that Williams had such a wide ranging practice, as far apart as Cairns, Perth, Bathurst to Devonport, at a time when travel was so slow and communication so difficult.<sup>72</sup> No church architect before or since then has had such an extensive practice in Australia.

---

68 Conversation with Josephine and Blyth Johnson.

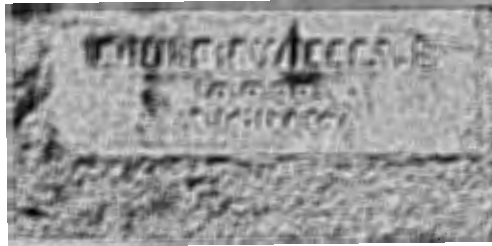
69 Williams to the R A I A, Canberra, 10 February 1976 (private papers).

70 Best Overend to Williams, 14 August 1970 (private papers).

71 Conversation with Blyth Johnson.

72 He frequently used telegrams as the only means of communication for urgent matters. Few phones were available in the back blocks of country towns, and postal services were very slow. Conversation with Williams. Also see LRW collection (SLV).

## COMMENTS



Williams's architecture could be categorised as basically Gothic Freestyle merged with Arts and Crafts, as seen in some of his early rural buildings. He was prepared to be enterprising in design and did not follow the main trend of architecture practised by his contemporaries. He was considered to be quite radical at the time for his use of solid concrete construction for St Mark's, Nyngan, NSW, which was adapted to suit Australian conditions with a hooded verandah and other heat resisting features.

The small church of St John's, Merbein, also of concrete, has prominent overhanging eaves of gabled roof and porch, quaint windows and square tower. He built other churches in this medium<sup>1</sup> and proved that bush churches could be attractive and environmentally compatible. They were durable, attractive and less expensive than brick or stone and required little maintenance.

Williams's small suburban churches of the twenties, such as St Luke's Brighton and St Stephen's, Gardenvale, with their small scale and proportions, represent his 'cottage' style, which blends easily into the environment. His use of the less expensive clinker bricks for St Stephen's was quite unusual at the time, though they had previously been used to build houses and flats. He believed that the clinkers with their richly coloured and crusty textures enhanced the artistic quality of his design. In these 'cottage' churches he has managed to create a warm and reverent atmosphere, consistent with the small proportions of the design.

1 Holy Trinity, Darby Falls, NSW; St Peter's, Broken Hill, NSW; St John's Alexandra; Holy Trinity, Whitfield.

His fine version of the Arts and Crafts style is manifested in St Ambrose Gilgandra, New South Wales (1921), with some heat resisting features. A cloister shields the nave from the sun and a good system of ventilation cools the building in summer. The circular apse with its splendid detailing, symmetrical transepts, windows way off centre, the unusual external porch and the spiky spire of the bellcote, create a striking effect. Walls were built of red bricks with cut and struck joints inside and out, while instead of plaster inside, projecting brickwork was used for decoration.

St Nicholas's, Mordialloc and All Saints', Emu both feature lively and unusual bellcotes. St Stephen's, Darebin, is one of the best examples of his Arts & Crafts style with its broad brick aisle arcade and simplified hammerbeam roof principals. It displays imaginative brickwork inside and outside, and a picturesque and spiky bellcote.

St Paul's, Caulfield is considered a transition from his 'cottage' churches, with its unusual internal buttresses, square headed windows and excellent facade, with raised bricks forming a dominant cross. This fine brick building with its noise reducing narthex provides a superb finish to the vista along Glenferrie Road. His winning design for the Methodist Church, Canterbury, is a splendid example of his early Gothic styled buildings, with the inclusion of a chancel, a central and side aisles, which were considered exceptional for a Methodist Church.

St Andrew's, Lutwyche, Queensland, in a Gothic idiom, has a beautiful structural quality about it, with its dominant tower and simple triangular buttresses, which add both interest and shade to the nave walls. St George's, Parkes, New South Wales, is one of his best buildings and a good example of the middle modern Gothic period of his style, which displays great power and originality.

St Mark's Chapel, Flinders (Westernport) Naval Depot, is designed in a modern Gothic style and built of Warrandyte freestone, which highlights the extra beauty Williams was able to achieve with the heavier texture of stone. The interior possesses that elusive quality - atmosphere, and is indeed a worthy memorial to the men and women who made the supreme sacrifice. Williams's impressive designs, express close contact with the navy and sea. The specially made curved bricks for the pulpit and lectern, represent the prow of a ship, while the sea horse, the wave-like cresting on the side chapel, the carved dolphins supporting the altar rails and the font embody the sea. The forty-eight pews bear the coat of arms of the various towns which donated them, from all over Australia. The fifty-four stained glass windows represent the many ships and crews which were lost in battle, and it would be



hard not to be moved by the sheer reverence of this chapel as one contemplates the sacrifice of those who perished and are remembered here.

St Andrew's Brighton is one of his later churches and represents post war modernism, where Williams has availed himself of more contemporary methods of construction and adopted a lighter styled architecture. Instead of a sturdy tower, he has used a slender spire terminated by a cross and designed the furnishings and fittings in a contemporary mode, as seen in the pews edged with gold, the stalls and bishop's chair.

In my opinion the least satisfactory of his churches is the church-cum-hall of St George's, Flemington (1925-6), which though architecturally remarkable, looks more like a school building or a Mechanics hall. This building, though no doubt serving its purpose well, does not resemble, in any fashion, a place of worship, even on a Sunday.

In contrast, Holy Cross, Mathoura, New South Wales (1936), a simple, humble church is well designed, picturesque and suited to its hot environment. Small windows, generous overhanging eaves, a cloister shading the wall, hooded baptistry and lined open timbered roof, assist in reducing the heat.

St Peter's Peace Memorial Church, Box Hill, which had been destroyed by fire,<sup>2</sup> was rebuilt by Williams to a new design in 1952-3 with an open timbered roof. In my opinion the church has been spoilt by the new reredos of mosaic tiles, which is not compatible with the furnishings and fittings of the interior.

The small modern church of Christ the King, Hillston, New South Wales (1965), built of custom made concrete bricks, because of the white ant, lacks the character and charm one has come to expect in even the smallest of Williams's churches.

This contrasts with the delightful modern St Luke's, Woy Woy, New South Wales (1958), of steel portal frame, with its slender tower, wide eaves, openable windows and excellent acoustics. which is a good example of the lighter style of Williams's architecture. Another attractive building in the same mode is St George's, Numurkah of 1961.

The Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Henty, NSW (1963),<sup>3</sup> was planned to suit the climate, with clerestory windows protected by the eaves to minimise

---

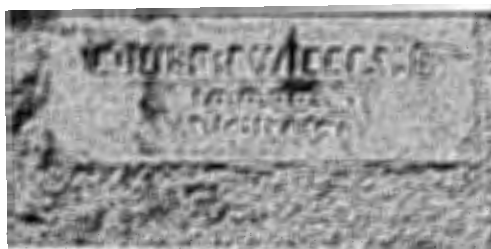
2 The wooden church was completely destroyed in 1949.

3 Williams & Partners designed this church (now St Paul's Lutheran Church).

heat entering the church. Ample openable grilles were also provided, which Williams used extensively in hot climates to create a movement of air through the building. It is of portal frame construction with feature walls at each end of the church of precast concrete, faced with white 50 mm thick quartz chips externally, secured to the brick walls. The roof construction is interesting with the purlins placed on top of the portal frames, rather than butted into them, to create a more effective feeling of space. There is no tower, but a 15.2 metre high spire, which supports a bell, and forms part of the front facade. The soundproof crying room for mothers with children has a glass panel to the nave. A small courtyard for after service discussion was created by means of glazed doors opening out from the side of the church. This modern church works well, and fulfils the trustees' request for something which was churchly, dignified and suitable.

Williams's furnishings are attractive and functional and contribute to the overall sense of atmosphere one finds in his churches, large and small. In his interiors, he has managed to create a degree of serenity, where parishioners can feel comfortable, hear well, and have a good view of the sanctuary. In his liturgically correct churches the celebrant will be confident that he will not lose his footing at the altar, see his notes floating down to the floor, or have to raise his voice, because of poor acoustics. He will no doubt be thankful that Louis Williams was the architect of the church.

## CONCLUSION



When Williams began his own practice, churches generally were designed in an English Gothic mode, and while not renouncing a study of past period work, he gave refreshing inspiration to his designs, saying that work must be innovative in its conception, 'based upon reason in architecture.'<sup>1</sup> His handling of the traditional Gothic style achieved an originality in a Free Gothic mode, incorporating contemporary and established construction techniques with considerable skill and a true sense of scale.

Williams's style grew out of Alexander North's style, reached maturity in the 1920s and continued to develop as his practice expanded. North's influence persisted throughout much of Williams's professional career, but is less marked in his later modern buildings.

In his small suburban churches there is an intimacy and charm, consistent with the small proportions of the design. Handcrafted furnishings enhanced the interiors, which reflect North's Arts & Crafts training. His lively bellcotes were probably inspired by R A Cram's *Church Building*<sup>2</sup> and differ from anything that North produced.

When working on a tight budget, Williams managed simple designs with considerable spark and inspiration, with shapes boldly modelled and not diluted in form, seen at St Luke's, Brighton and St Stephen's, Gardenvale. In comparison Christ Church, Essendon; St Paul's, Fairfield; St Jude's, Alphington; and St John's East Malvern, lack flair and imagination and are very pedestrian in their design. These include a bland reproduction of period features with little grasp of overall form, poor proportion and articulation, mediocre detailing and little if any innovation.<sup>3</sup> They do not compare with the quality and originality of St Paul's, Caulfield, or the Peace Memorial Church East Malvern, built during the North & Williams partnership.<sup>4</sup>

---

1 LRW 'The Spirit', p 123

2 R A Cram, *Church Building*, Boston 1914, fig VI.

3 Conversation with John Maidment.

4 The N & W partnership officially ended in 1921, but from 1916 North commuted between Tasmania and Melbourne leaving Williams responsible for most of the work.

When funds were plentiful Williams produced an exquisite Gothic gem, seen in the Alice Boston Memorial Church of St David, Cooe, with its graceful tower, splendid open timbered roof and Tasmanian oak furnishings.

In the late 1920s Williams used plain walls, bold modelling for his towers, piers, sanctuary walls, &c with mostly red plain bricks and some sculptural features. His inspiration for this period was mainly the work of Giles Gilbert Scott with his simplified Gothic interpretation of the Decorated period, suitable for brickwork, and concentration on light and the clear articulation of space. The interiors of Williams's churches were not as dark as previously.<sup>5</sup>

His use of red and blue clinker bricks for ecclesiastical architecture in 1925 was unusual, but he used them in banded patterns to produce interesting effects. During the 1930s and 40s he aimed for brighter churches, admitting more light into the nave and sanctuary. He frequently used plastered walls, or cream bricks, and introduced more segmental arches, and some beautiful modelling and detailing. St Paul's, Caulfield, reflects a more sophisticated trend, where he moved the buttresses from outside to inside to make more space in the nave, at minimum cost. They also served to articulate interiors and offer clear definition to the bays.

Some of his incomplete designs were never realised, such major works as All Saints' Bendigo,<sup>6</sup> which due to lack of funds was only partially constructed, but if built would have been a magnificent building. All Saints' Cathedral Bathurst, is another example of fine design, which was not carried to conclusion.<sup>7</sup>

In his modern churches of the 1950s and 60s he produced works which were not always inspiring, and when left to his own devices sometimes introduced some quite incongruous features. However the major buildings which he got fired up about and which well exemplify his concepts were St John's Camberwell, St Boniface Cathedral Bunbury, and St Andrew's, Brighton.

Williams excelled in his furnishing designs, notably his Arts & Crafts motifs at St John's, Toorak, and St Mark's Chapel, Naval War memorial, Crib Point. The narthex screen at All Saints' East St Kilda, and chancel screens at St Luke's, South Melbourne and Geelong Grammar School chapel, represent his modern Gothic ecclesiastical furnishings.<sup>8</sup>

He was innovative in his use of a cross motif as at St Paul's, Caulfield, where the large mural cross relies on delicate lines of shadow from the raised bricks to define its form. St Silas's Albert Park, features a prominent cross of raised bricks in the upper part of the gable. A pressed cement Celtic cross on the west

5 Conversation with B Johnson.

6 In conjunction with Gawler & Drummond.

7 His Warriors' Chapel and the east end were built, and his splendid furnishings made.

8 The organ case at the original St Andrew's, Brighton, a WW1 memorial, incorporated a screen as well as elaborate casing for the organ by W L Roberts (conversation with John Maidment). In his later churches Williams discontinued the use of screens, to provide a better view of the sanctuary and closer observance of the rituals.

wall of St Cuthbert's, East Brunswick, incorporates a rose window, the long arm of which extends to the ground.

He had a fine sense of scale and proportion, and varied his use of materials, colour, texture and light to great effect. In the early twenties he built some small village churches of concrete, and attractive little timber gems.<sup>9</sup> In his early brick churches he used the Melbourne red brick or clinkers, later the more elegant cream, and when working interstate used bricks available in the particular locality. But he discontinued plastered walls for interiors, which showed up the slightest cracks.<sup>10</sup>

Williams was at the vanguard of many changes in the design of Anglican churches throughout Australia, which have a distinctive mark of freshness and originality. He imparted specific characteristics to churches with his aesthetic sense of space,<sup>11</sup> ensuring an unimpeded approach to the sanctuary, and an imaginative and more functional proportion of open space throughout the church. A roomy sanctuary, wider chancels, spacious nave, well-spaced pews, side aisle access, wide central passageways and spacious narthex allowed for dignified ceremonial.

He cautioned that large windows at both east and west ends are ill-suited to the predominant sunlight of our climate, whereas windows placed high up and to the sides are usually effective. Arcaded cloisters, deep recessed openings and wide eaves reduce the sunlight entering the interior and assist the cooling. His openable grilles in the side walls of the nave and sanctuary allowed a movement of fresh air, and internal buttresses provided added space. The interior was designed to give precedence to the sanctuary and to accommodate the altar, which was often very wide and the primary focus of the east end.

In his treatment of the east end he used various ideas for the wall behind the altar. He preferred no east window,<sup>12</sup> which caused glare, but sometimes set a rose window high on the wall, ensuring it was not cut off by an intrusive beam. He often placed a large cross on a plain wall, as at St Silas's, North Balwyn, and in the great apse at St Andrew's, Brighton, lit from the side to give a glare-free light. A draped curtain at Bunbury cathedral replaced the planned mural, while curtains were used in some country churches, and at Geelong Grammar School chapel. Riddell posts and curtains enhanced St Andrew's, Clifton Hill and St Augustine's, Shepparton, while timber panelling adorned St John's, Cairns, and St Andrew's, Lismore, NSW. A large painted mural dominates the east end of St John's, Camberwell, and an opus sectile mosaic decorates the Angel chapel altar at St John's, Toorak.

Williams favoured a western choir gallery, with a spacious narthex under.<sup>13</sup>

9 Such as St Nicholas's, Werrimull.

10 Should cracks occur in plain brick interiors, they are less noticeable.

11 See chapter on 'offering of space'.

12 But when church authorities insisted on an east window, he ensured it did not reach right down to the altar, but placed it high up on the wall, with non glare glass.

13 LRW, 'Church architecture', p 194. The spacious narthex provided vested clergy adequate space to assemble with dignity, and protection from bad weather.

He used large areas of plain walls to highlight a special architectural feature, and designed some splendid open timbered roofs, and at other times used acoustic tiles and lined ceilings. He was inventive in the wall finishes of church interiors, using well-crafted brickwork and timber. He designed churches suited to the environment and the varying temperatures of Australia,<sup>14</sup> and his climatic control was most effective.<sup>15</sup> He stressed that an ecclesiastical building, no matter how small, 'should possess that elusive quality - atmosphere'.<sup>16</sup>

Canon Selwyn Hughes greatly influenced Williams in liturgical arrangement. Father Geoffrey Taylor<sup>17</sup> said he was the only architect who designed liturgically correct churches, with special attention to the depth of sanctuaries, width of treads, and had an amazing understanding of things ecclesiastical.<sup>18</sup> Other churchmen testify that he designed liturgically proper buildings.<sup>19</sup>

Williams has been referred to as an Arts and Crafts architect, but was not alone in this field, and compares favourably with his contemporaries.<sup>20</sup> He handled this style deftly using traditional local building materials, hand craftsmanship, and respect for the environment. His finest churches are highly individual examples of brickwork with soaring arches and dim, cool interiors, keeping out the heat and brightness of the Australian sun. He would have liked more opportunities of working in stone if affordable.

He was regularly consulted by church authorities for advice on properties owned by the Anglican Church, and by other denominations. His services as an arbitrator were widely used. He had more opportunities than most of his contemporaries in Australia to design and refurbish ecclesiastical buildings, because there were few architects with his specific skills in church architecture, gained during his lengthy practice in this field.

Williams noted that the trend in church architecture in the fifty years up to the seventies had been towards simplicity, cleanness of line, and compactness. Modern church architecture was increasingly accepted by the churches in Australia and designs were modified to meet new needs, changing liturgies, closer relationships between clergy and laity, the development of modern materials and new methods of construction.<sup>21</sup>

Numerous new churches evolved from his office after the 1950s.<sup>22</sup> These buildings come to grips with modernism, and a fresh architectural expression in the design of churches, which were frequently influenced by his partners.

14 Ranging from the humidity of Townsville, the heat of Western Australia and parts of New South Wales, to the cooler regions of Victoria and Tasmania.

15 See previous chapter re cooler churches.

16 LRW 'The Spirit of its Architecture', p 123.

17 He was incumbent of St Peter's from 1964-79.

18 Conversation with the Reverend Father Geoffrey Taylor.

19 See above for comments by Bishop Grant and others.

20 However, he was possibly one of the few architects still using Arts & Crafts motifs in 1962, seen on furnishings in St Boniface cathedral, Bunbury. See 'cathedrals'.

21 LRW 'Church Architecture', p 195. His use of steel framing seen at St John's, Camberwell and St Andrew's, Brighton is evidence of this.

22 See appendix.



Although he may have done the initial sketch, he encouraged new thoughts and realised he had to keep up with the times and let the younger partners have a go.<sup>23</sup>

His churches range in style from the small bush churches of Merbein and Mathoura to the Arts & Crafts Darebin and Mordialloc, with transition from the earlier forms to St Paul's, Caulfield, and development in the solid well-sculptured Gothic St George's, Parkes, New South Wales. St John's, Camberwell, St Andrew's, Brighton and Bunbury Cathedral represent contemporary architecture, being much lighter in structure. Bunbury though impressive, is not as interesting as St Andrew's, Brighton, where he has applied principles of modern architecture to his own particular Gothic Free style.

Johnson maintained that no other church architect in Australia can have had such widespread influence and enormous output as Williams.<sup>24</sup> He influenced many men who worked as his assistants, notably two who became leaders in their profession, Roy Simpson AO, and Peter Newell.<sup>25</sup> Both architects admired Williams as a practitioner, who was venturesome, and one who did not follow the mainstream of popular architecture of his contemporaries, but developed his own specific style and achieved a remarkable output.<sup>26</sup>

Williams's legacy must surely be the emphasis he placed on the historical development of church architecture and the part he played in such improvement, based on sound building practice. He created something new and meaningful for each congregation, and suited the building to its surroundings, whether for a small country township or a large town. In the best of his church interiors, the *raison d'être* of the building - the working bit, there is a religious, worshipful, even mystical quality about them.<sup>27</sup> I would agree with Cable who said, 'No other church architect of his time did so much, so widely or for so long'.<sup>28</sup>

Williams was one of the most proficient architects of his era to practise in Australia, and with his profound knowledge of ecclesiology, fertile imagination and skilful handling of space, light and form, became a legend in his own lifetime. He used materials close to hand, patronised local craftsmen and artists, and designed scores of churches and other buildings during his sixty five years in architectural practice. He was rightly called 'the grand old man of church architecture in Australia this century'.<sup>29</sup>

23 Conversation with Johnson.

24 Johnson, formerly of Williams & partners, to Peter Newell, 30 October 1974.

25 Yuncken Freeman and partners, and Peter Newell of Ford, Hutton & Newell, Brisbane.

26 Conversation with Roy Simpson and Peter Newell.

27 Conversation with Johnson.

28 Cable, *From Oxford to the Bush*. p 119

29 *Church Scene*, 13, 15 July 1976, p 19.



Minerva Access is the Institutional Repository of The University of Melbourne

**Author/s:**

Moore, Gladys Marie

**Title:**

Louis Reginald Williams

**Date:**

2001

**Citation:**

Moore, G. M. (2001). Louis Reginald Williams. Masters Research thesis, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, The University of Melbourne.

**Publication Status:**

Unpublished

**Persistent Link:**

<http://hdl.handle.net/11343/38261>

**Terms and Conditions:**

Terms and Conditions: Copyright in works deposited in Minerva Access is retained by the copyright owner. The work may not be altered without permission from the copyright owner. Readers may only download, print and save electronic copies of whole works for their own personal non-commercial use. Any use that exceeds these limits requires permission from the copyright owner. Attribution is essential when quoting or paraphrasing from these works.